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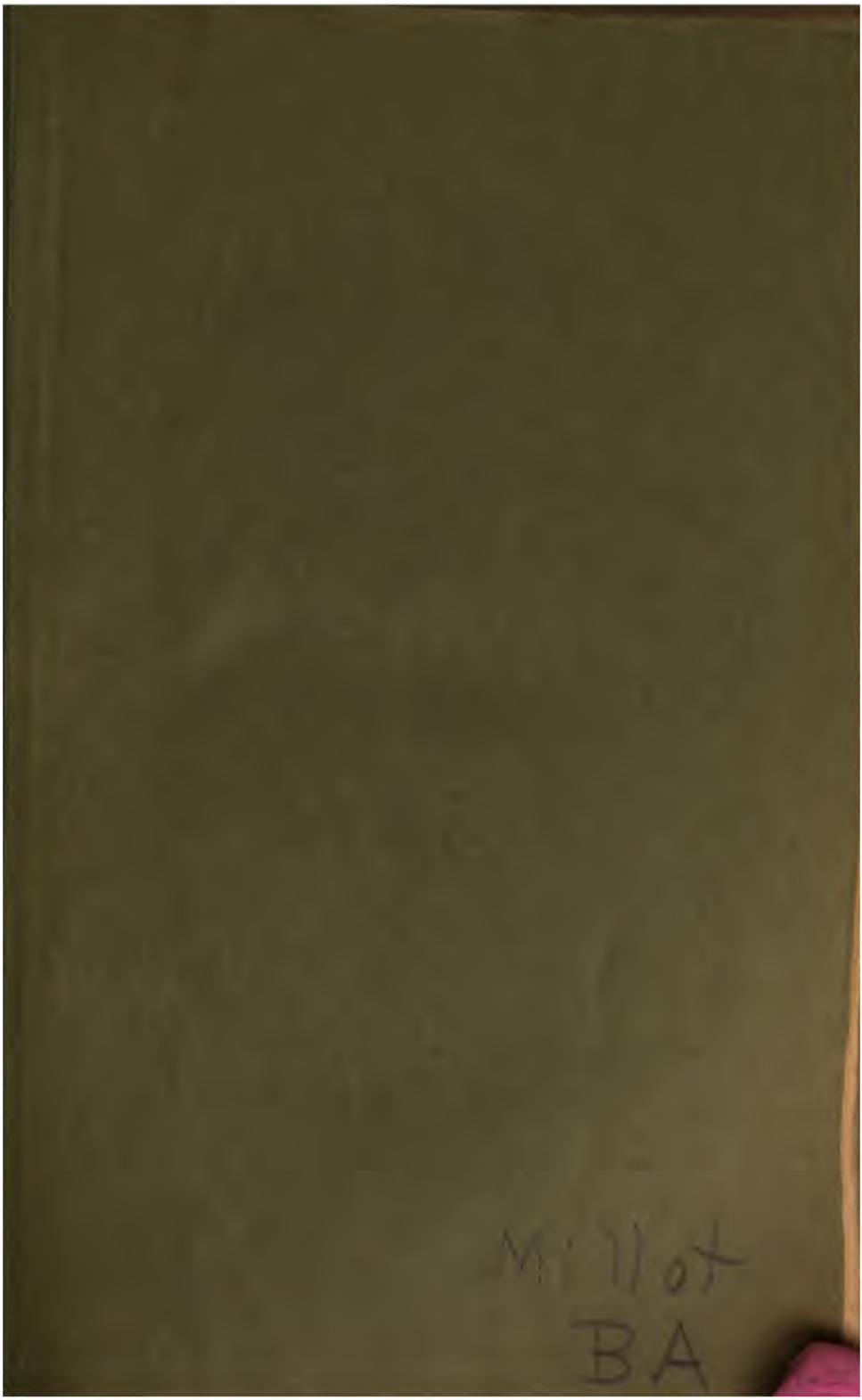

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ELEMENTS

OF GENERAL HISTORY

ANCIENT AND MODERN.

BY THE ABBE MILLOT. (C. F. X.) abbé.

WITH THE CONTINUATION FROM MDCCLX TO THE YEAR MDCCCXV, BY M. PROFESSOR MILLON OF PARIS.

A NEW EDITION REVISED.

VOLUME I.

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PREFACE.

THE Princes of Parma, who are descended from the most illustrious family in Europe, ever since their accession to that Dutchy, have formed a number of establishments for the improvement of those branches of knowledge that have an immediate tendency to promote the happiness of society. From a conviction that history is one of the best schools for informing the minds of the people, and making them truly virtuous, they have neglected nothing which could facilitate that study, and direct it in such a manner as promised the greatest benefit to the Public; particularly by making it part of the education of the young nobility.

I have had the honour of being employed on this important subject; and the plan which was published in 1768, by order of His Royal Highness the Infant Don Ferdinand, Duke of Parma, will give a sufficient idea of the method I pursued; to which I shall only add a few observations upon the contents of the first volumes.

Some celebrated moderns have too violently cried down Ancient History; and, were we to hearken to them, it ought not only to be banished from the schools, but excluded from the closets of people of fashion, as being equally fabulous and useless, and engrossing too much of that time which ought to be dedicated to more important studies.

It must be acknowledged, that we should not give it the preference to subjects in which we are more deeply interested, as was formerly the case; nor, with pedantic dulness, heap up trifling niceties, while employed in the education of a gentleman. It should not be rendered absurd by the ad-

mission of senseless fables, nor tiresome by fruitless inquiries; in a word, we should not give an appearance of importance to things which are only an oppressive load to the memory.

But Ancient History, when reduced to proper limits, will not only prove a strong incentive to curiosity, but a source from whence the most valuable information, and even the principles of the most important knowledge, may be obtained without much trouble. *Considering it in this light, I have* done my endeavour to select the substance, in a work that is both short and distinct, which contains and explains the truths that principally merit our attention.

The *Discourse upon Universal History* by the great Bossuet, which is one of the masterpieces of the age of Louis XIV., presents us, in his eloquent and concise manner, only with a chronological series of events, stript entirely of circumstances; so that, to be able to read it to advantage, it is necessary to be already acquainted with history.

The last part of that Discourse, where the illustrious prelate treats of customs, governments, &c. is full of the most sublime reflections, which deserve the greatest attention, but cannot be understood, without a competent share of historical knowledge. Bossuet has executed his plan like a man of genius; and, if I have presumed sometimes to deviate from his opinions, it is because several points which were not so well known in his time, have since been cleared up by the learned. Particularly M. Goguet, in his *Origin of Laws and Governments, &c.* has given us more just ideas of the ancients.

The faults commonly ascribed to Mr Rollin are, that he is too diffuse and inaccurate; but at the same time we must allow, that his memory and his writings merit the greatest respect. In following a very different route from him, may I be found to have copied those virtuous sentiments by which his pen was always guided!

If some scrupulous readers think proper

to blame me for having insisted more than he has done on the excesses of credulity and superstition, I have but two words to say in reply. Credulity is the parent of error, and superstition is the enemy of that Divine religion which the Christians have received as a rule for their conduct in life, and as a pledge of their future happiness.

I have divided my work methodically, and in such a manner as to make each chapter the subject of one lesson for youth The marginal notes are a kind of analysis, which will be of use to assist the memory. The Table of Ancient Geography, at the end of the second volume, contains nothing but what I think necessary; and the Chronological Table at the end of the sixth, ascertains the periods of the most remarkable events.

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ELEMENTS

OF

GENERAL HISTORY.

ANCIENT HISTORY.

PART FIRST.

ELEMENTS

OF

GENERAL HISTORY.

INTRODUCTION.

An immense field presents itself to our view. We are to examine the lapse of ages, and the extent of the world. A knowledge of the human race is the object of our inquiries; and surely there can be no subject so deserving the curiosity of man. He may, with eminent advantage, contemplate the phenomena of heaven, the productions of the earth, all the riches, all the beauties of nature, that magnificent spectacle which displays the wisdom and greatness of the Creator; but the origin, the progress, the decline of nations and empires; the wonderful effects produced by the working of the passions, and the force of genius; the surprising variety of laws, manners, customs, and opinions; the events which have so frequently changed the face of the world; in a word, the objects which are displayed in history have a much more intimate connexion with his own concerns. While he remains without a knowledge of them, he is like a stranger in his native land; he must be ignorant of human nature, and of course deficient

The importance of history to mankind.

in that understanding which is necessary to make him hold a respectable rank among his fellow-creatures. 'History,' says Cicero, 'is the light of truth, the directress of life;' an encomium which displays all its advantages.

Its effects upon the understanding.

Is there a single error or hurtful prejudice, from which it cannot preserve us, by the pictures it draws of the follies and illusions by which men have been led astray? Is there a vice whose deformity and unhappy consequences it does not represent by numberless examples? Or is there a virtue of which it does not inspire the love, by rendering sacred the names of the virtuous? Is there a situation in life, for which it does not afford some excellent instructions? Or is there a condition, from the throne of the king to the closet of the philosopher, which may not profit, in some degree, by the knowledge it communicates?

Two rules for the study of it.

But we should be lost in the immensity of this career, if we were to run on at random, without some established principles. Our studies ought to be guided by two important rules: The first, to seek the truth in every thing; and the second, to confine ourselves to what is useful; otherwise history itself would become a source of error, and what it contains truly valuable would be lost in a mass of trifles.

Innumerable errors in ancient history.

Although every historian professes to write nothing but the truth, the most part of our ancient histories are filled with fables; and these fictions sometimes appear again from the pens of modern writers. If an author of established reputation has written falsehoods, it is thought a reason sufficient for others to repeat them with a blind confidence; his authority imposes

upon them, and they are more pleased with believing than examining. Thus, all the impositions contrived or brought into credit by interest, vanity, superstition, ignorance, spirit of party, or popular prejudice, are so incorporated with the truth, that they descend together from age to age. Do we not daily meet with contradictory relations of the same facts; with descriptions totally different of the same person; with the most palpable untruths circulating in conversation, and finding admittance into books? From thence we may judge of the innumerable errors which have been transmitted to us from antiquity. Revelation alone is essentially true; every thing else has often been mixed with falsehood.

The source of errors and falsehoods in history.

If we had no historians but men of sound judgment, clear understanding, and sincerity, we needed only to collect the principal strokes of their writings, to give a faithful picture of the nations and events which they have described; but unfortunately some have endeavoured to please by the wonderful, others to flatter their countrymen by chimeras: one set has confirmed those superstitions by which they found themselves gainers, and another been solicitous to gratify either national or personal hatred: Some have been weakly credulous, and with great sincerity repeated all the traditions which have been handed down to them; while others, who were deeper politicians, have uncandidly concealed, in clouds of darkness, those truths which were opposite to their own interests, or the interests of their party.

Therefore we should examine and judge.

The greatest part have wanted proper assistance, and many have been seen without either

truth or rectitude; we should therefore be always upon our guard, and constantly guided by the rules of criticism and reason, both to prevent our falling into mistakes, and to distinguish among the fables and prejudices of antiquity, whatever is truly deserving of a place in history. Fictions may find admission, but only as monuments of the weakness of the human mind, and as proofs of the necessity of examining every subject upon which the seal of divine truth is not impressed.

Scepticism as unreasonable as excess of credulity.

With regard to historical facts, scepticism is not less unreasonable than blind credulity. Because there are a great number of fictions, are we therefore not to admit of any thing as certain? Is it sufficient to reject a fact because it is improbable? Ought not the number and quality of the witnesses to be of weight in confirming the evidence? Can intelligent and disinterested cotemporaries be deceived, or deceive the world in their account of public events? In a word, does not experience show us that we fall equally into error, by believing nothing, and by believing every thing? What Herodotus has transmitted to us of the Egyptian annals, is partly fabulous, and hence, it seems, we should equally distrust what he has related of the Egyptian monuments; but the pyramids, after the lapse of so many ages, still continue to corroborate the testimony of the historian. The priests of the country misled him by their chimerical traditions; but what he saw he has truly described. Without attempting to discuss such an inexhaustible subject, I shall only add, that we may obtain excellent instruction, even by reasoning on the

probability of facts, where the certainty is not established. How much are they still superior to the fictions of romance?

To leave deep researches to the learned.

According to the rule which we have laid down, it is equally necessary to confine our inquiries to what is useful, as it is important to seek the truth. Let the learned who have a taste for such studies give themselves up to minute inquiries; let them dive into the depths of erudition, and examine every historical detail. Perhaps few solid advantages can be derived from their researches; but they are masters of their own time; and their labours entitle them to respect, when the result is an increase of knowledge to the literary world. The learned men of former ages, whose works are neglected at present, have been of great use to the public, by cultivating those barren wastes, where now are reaped most valuable harvests. The learned moderns, who are more addicted to critical examination, have procured for us more solid acquisitions. We have only to extract every possible advantage from their labours, and to employ for our own wants, what others have been at pains to procure as food for vain curiosity.

To learn only what is possible and useful to be retained.

The memory is generally too weak to support the load of a very extensive erudition; the human genius too limited to be able to perceive distinctly a vast multitude of objects when confounded together; besides, the duties which we owe to the state or to society, leave to very few people sufficient time to trace history through its tedious windings. To grasp at more than we can possibly retain, is the way to know nothing, or, what is almost the same thing, to

know imperfectly. Yet though we were capable of retaining all that we read, were it not better to learn to think? We very rarely see a correct judgment the companion of an extraordinary memory. Whoever wishes to be usefully instructed, must forbid himself the knowledge of a number of things, and if he is wise, it will soon cease to be a matter of affliction.

Criticism on Langlet's plan of studying.

I do not understand the plan of study proposed by the learned Langlet Dufresnoy, at the beginning of his *Chronological Tables*. He prescribes the reading all the original authors (a very good rule when it can be followed): He then calculates the time which this study requires, and with wonderful economy. He assigns, for example, twelve days for Herodotus; ten for Thucydides; six for Xenophon; twenty for Livy, with the Supplements; ten for Polybius; as many for Tacitus, &c. We should be apt to imagine that these historians were to be read like agreeable romances; and, after having glanced them over leaf by leaf from beginning to end, the reader should be able to retain, comprehend, and digest them. But, besides that every man is not capable of reading the originals, without a miraculous capacity and penetration; what will such a rapid perusal produce, but an useless heap of words and confused ideas, which must smother good sense, instead of procuring instruction? A simple knowledge of the world is greatly to be preferred to that pedantic learning, which, instead of fruit, is only productive of brambles.

Objects the most deserving our attention.

If we have the good fortune to be capable of ascending to the fountain-head, and studying the originals, we ought nevertheless to prefer

what is useful, to those objects which are only matter for learned disquisition. What must they do, who have neither the means nor time for applying to studies of such immense extent? It is in such situations that we should confine ourselves to what is necessary. Then the knowledge of men, and what is principally interesting to human nature; the springs of the passions and the sports of fortune; the virtues and vices of nations, and of remarkable characters in the world; the influence of laws and customs; the nature of governments; the principles and views of state policy; the causes of the grandeur and decline of states; the revolutions which have been effected by time, arms, or moral causes; events followed by great consequences; the monuments of folly, as well as of genius and prudence; are subjects with which every one ought to be acquainted, since nothing can be so useful in forming the heart and mind, and improving the talents and the social virtues. In studying history, every individual will endeavour to find those instructions which relate particularly to his own condition; but above all things we should consider that we are men and citizens; and if we make ourselves perfect in these primary qualifications, the others will not remain unimproved.

Uncertainty of chronological systems.

By confining ourselves to the principles with which we set out, and adhering only to what is true and useful, we shall not lose time by following crowds of learned writers, who have wasted their lives in the darkness of ancient chronology. The design of showing, where different historians agree, and of reconciling ancient profane history with the Holy Scriptures, has given

birth to more than threescore and ten different systems, a number sufficient to prove their want of solidity; for if it were possible to disentangle the chaos, what could so much learning and such calculations produce, but contradictory systems? The difference which is found between the Hebrew text of the Sacred Writings and the Vulgate; the Samaritan and the version of the Septuagint, afford a foundation for suppositions and conjectures. Usher, a celebrated Englishman, in conformity to the Hebrew, fixes the beginning of the Christian era, or the birth of Jesus Christ, in the year of the world 4004. The greatest part of the partisans of the Samaritan, and, among the rest, the authors of the English Universal History, place this epocha in the year 4305. The common copies of the Septuagint fix it in the year 5270; and Father Pezron, enlarging the calculation of the Septuagint, brings it to the year 5873. Thus between the Septuagint of Pezron and the Hebrew of Usher, the difference is 1869 years. The chronologists who have been the fondest of their systems, succeeded much worse in proving the solidity of their own, than in destroying those of their adversaries. They have all an infinite number of objections to answer. Even the great Newton, who engaged in this pursuit, and who lessens the duration of the world, already so short, can scarcely do more than increase our doubts.

Difference between the three texts of Scripture.

The greater the number of hypotheses which are formed from particular passages in Scripture, the more our doubts will be multiplied. Providence designed revelation to make men holy, not learned. Let us adore its oracles and mysteries, but let us not attempt to explain

Revelation should come from saints, and not from the learned.

what is inexplicable. Let us be afraid of running into absurdities, like the learned Father Petau, who, being restricted by the limits of the Hebrew text, and peopling the earth according to the flights of his too fertile imagination, gives a hundred and fifty times more inhabitants to the world in less than three centuries after the deluge, than are supposed to be in it at present. *

The world proved not to be very ancient by all histories.

Profane history agrees with the Bible in proving almost a total destruction, and renewal of the human race. Almost all of them represent the different nations at first savage, gradually acquiring the most necessary arts, and arriving at a knowledge of the sciences, after a long period of barbarism. There are even visible marks of the infancy of those who pretend to the greatest antiquity, which are sufficient to satisfy a reasonable curiosity. But when did the world begin? When was the earth depopulated by the deluge? When, and how, were new nations formed? In vain shall we attempt to know these things, since no monument either sacred or profane has fixed these periods with precision.

Bossuet's method of fixing the epochas.

The illustrious Bossuet, after the example of his predecessors, gives a date to the creation of the world, and affixes periods, taken principally from the Scriptures, for all the events of ancient history, such as the time of the deluge, the calling of Abraham, Moses, or the written law, &c. He overleaps at one bound the immense difficulties we have been speaking of; and, following the Hebrew chronology with Usher, he supposes that every thing naturally

* Petavii, Doct. Temp. lib. ix. c. 4.

arranges itself in that narrow compass. But however respectable the authority of these great men may be, their chronological system is not the less difficult to support; were it even probable, it could never be any thing but a system; and where is the need of a system? In every subject, but more particularly in history, we should readily confess our ignorance, rather than give things as true which are at least doubtful.

If it is proper to mix sacred with profane history.

Besides, the mixture of sacred history with profane is perhaps as absurd as that of theology with philosophy. Every thing is supernatural on one side; on the other, natural; there, faith is required; here, reason: Religion should be studied in the Bible with humble docility; history, with a free and bold criticism. By confounding two studies so dissimilar, we should be afraid of corrupting the simplicity of the faith, and changing history into frivolous conjecture.

Plan of this work.

To avoid this double mistake, we shall neither affix a date to the creation, nor to the deluge; we shall not mention the Jews but where they come into our general plan; and we shall briefly display, without chronological order, or confounding the different subjects, whatever is most worthy of attention in the transactions of ancient nations, to the time of the Greeks and Romans, whose history leads us to that of the moderns, in which we are more particularly interested.

ELEMENTS

OF

GENERAL HISTORY.

ANCIENT HISTORY.

PART FIRST.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS UPON THE ANCIENTS.

Men were at first savages.

THE greatest part of our ancient traditions speak of those times, when men were dispersed over the face of the earth, wandering in woods, beset with wants and dangers, solely employed in procuring subsistence, or in watching for their preservation, and reduced almost to a level with the instinct of brutes; guided only by the impulse of nature, and ignorant of all rules, laws, subordination, arts, or any permanent bond of society. Many countries still show vestiges of that savage state, so humiliating to mankind.

The origin of society.

Nevertheless, man is naturally sociable, and an inborn sentiment attracts him to the individuals of his kind. Affection for a female and children, disposes him to form more extended connexions. Reciprocal assistance and necessi-

ties unite a number of these savages on different spots, sometimes to defend themselves against the attacks of wild beasts, at others to procure necessary nourishment. The more they become sensible of the advantages of such union, they grow more solicitous to make it binding. Some tacit conventions form their first engagements, and a few rude customs supply the want of a regular police. It is, for some time, only a sketch of society, which does not root up barbarism, nor introduce a love of virtue; every thing relates to, and is limited by, the calls of nature. If hunger urges the eating of human flesh, and custom gives a relish for it, perhaps men will, without scruple, become cannibals. The history of the four quarters of the world furnishes more than one example of this horrid outrage against nature. To what excesses will not man reconcile himself, when he is hurried on by circumstances, and without any curb to restrain him!

Anthropophagi.

To transform separate hordes into nations, to erect them into empires, in one word to civilize men, it is necessary that several arts be successively invented, and agriculture, which is the true source of civilization, be gradually introduced. It is necessary, before the fiery passion of love be checked, and marriage be firmly established, to have an idea and the practice of some form of government; language should be understood to a certain degree; and knowledge multiplied; and men should have emerged from that state of barbarism in which almost all America is plunged at this day. What an immense space must have intervened between that time and the invention of writing, or the

Nations civilized by marriage, arts, and agriculture.

art of preserving the remembrance of facts, and even of thoughts! This is unquestionably one of the greatest efforts of genius cultivated by the other arts. Hence the first authors of profane history could not have flourished till a long time after the formation of states; they could have no materials but vague and confused oral traditions; and therefore they have handed down to us nothing but a series of fables upon the antiquities of their country.

Writing but a late invention.

These fables collected, and undoubtedly much amplified by the Greeks, who were greater friends of the marvellous than of truth, have quite disfigured ancient history. Let us lay hold of the few valuable truths which are wrapped up in them, and, renouncing all useless discussions, begin with the Egyptians, not because they are the most ancient people, but because they afford matter of much valuable instruction.

The Greeks fond of fables.

OF THE

EGYPTIANS.

CHAP. I.

ANCIENT HISTORY OF EGYPT.

Advantageous situation of Egypt.

EGYPT, which is situated between the twenty-fourth and thirty-third degree of north latitude, is one of the countries of the world the most favoured by nature; the sky is serene, the soil fertile, the plants and fruits agreeable and salutary: but a wonderful degree of industry would have been necessary to render it habitable for a considerable number of people.

The Nile.

The overflowing of the Nile procures every advantage, and supplies the want of rain, which never falls in that country. That river has its source in a mountain in Abyssinia, from whence it does not arrive in Egypt till after it has been precipitated over seven cataracts, with a noise which is heard at the distance of a number of leagues. It begins to swell in the month of May; and, by a gradual increase, which is almost imperceptible at first, it arrives at a sufficient height to overflow the country, and remains in that state from the month of June till

October. The Ancients, who were ignorant of the causes of the inundation, have assigned some fabulous reasons, which will always be the case when people substitute conjectures instead of facts. At present, we know that it rains in Ethiopia five months of the year, from April to September, which is the secret of the overflowing of the Nile; and the precious mud which it deposites, produces the amazing fertility of Egypt. Thus, lands which are naturally dry and sandy, become the best soil in the world. They need only sow without almost any culture, to reap, in a very short time, all the natural productions. Egypt, during the summer, appears like a sea, with cities, villages, and thickets, scattered over it, and affording a most wonderful and singular prospect; in the winter it becomes a gladsome plain, covered with flocks, herds, and husbandmen, where orange, citron, and other fragrant trees are seen, whose flowers delight the eye, and perfume the surrounding air. Modern travellers give nearly the same description with the ancients.

Cause and effects of the overflowing of the Nile.

This beautiful country, which was one of the first inhabited by man in a civilized state, is naturally the land of fable. The ancient Egyptian chronologists trace back innumerable ages. The truth is, that the Theban priests, according to the account of Herodotus, who was informed upon the spot, only gave eleven thousand three hundred and forty years duration to their monarchy, while others were scarce content with a hundred thousand years. From their first king to Sethon, they reckoned precisely 341 generations, 341 kings, 341 pontiffs, a calculation

Fabulous chronology of the Egyptians.

which appears sufficiently absurd, only by the repetition of the same number. Manetho, the Egyptian priest, who wrote about three hundred years before Jesus Christ, and whose authority appeared respectable even in the eyes of the historian Josephus, relates that Egypt was at first governed by gods and demi-gods. Vulcan, who was the first according to his account, reigned nine thousand years. To these chimerical divinities, he adds a series of thirty-one dynasties, giving the names of all the princes whom he supposes to have reigned over Egypt, in succession, for the space of more than five thousand years. Petau and some other learned men reject these dynasties as fabulous, while Marsham and Pezron receive them as well founded. They conjecture, that, instead of being successive, they were collateral; that is to say, they reigned at the same time, and they have displayed all their learning in endeavouring to reconcile them with Scripture chronology. But can annals filled only with names, and almost totally void of facts, deserve such profound application? The learned, like geometricians, frequently endeavour to signalize themselves by wonderful combinations, which in the end produce nothing but surprise; the last, however, show the truth of their calculations, while the first can scarce render their conjectures probable, when they plunge themselves into the abyss of ages. Egypt was become a kingdom in Abraham's time, and the Jews did not even make a body sufficient to be called a nation. This proof of antiquity is the more striking, as the Vulgate makes only four hundred and twenty-six years, between the calling of Abraham and the deluge.

The dynasties of Manetho rejected by some, and received by others.

The antiquity of Egypt according to Scripture.

Let us pass by the fables of Isis, Osiris, Typhon, Hermes (likewise called Mercury, Thoth, and Trismegistus), to whom the Egyptians were indebted for the knowledge of almost all the arts and sciences, and whose books, according to Manetho, amounted to more than thirty-six thousand five hundred. * It will be sufficient to observe, that Osiris, according to the Egyptians, polished the nation, which was at that time savage; that Isis, his wife and sister, shared with him in his divine honours; that that god having undertaken to civilize the other nations by the charms of eloquence, poetry and music, was killed by his brother Typhon, at his return from his glorious expedition; and lastly, that the principal deities were men to whom divine honours were paid, for some eminent services which they rendered to mankind.

Isis, Osiris, Hermes, &c. deified for their services.

From the time of Menes first king of Egypt (whom serious authors suppose to have been the son of Cham, and grandson of Noah), to that of the celebrated Sesostris, we find an immense interval, in which are placed the shepherd kings of Arabia, that made the conquest of Egypt. Besides, in this space of time, there is nothing to attract the attention, except the palace or tomb of Osymandias, and the lake Mœris. The most ancient library in the world was in the palace of Osymandias, and had this inscription written upon it, *Physic of the Soul;* a true and sublime inscription, if applied only to good books, bad books being rather a poison than a medicine. The lake which was dug

Interval from the time of Menes.

Osymandias's library.

* The learned believe that there were several Hermeses, as there were several Zoroasters, in Persia.

by order of Mœris, in the midst of which two pyramids were erected, received the waters of the Nile, either to obviate the inconvenience of too great an inundation, or to supply the want of a sufficient overflowing of the river; for it was necessary that the Nile should rise at least fifteen cubits, to prevent a scarcity. If we were to believe Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, who are copied by Bossuet, this lake was three thousand six hundred furlongs, or a hundred and eighty leagues in circumference, and three hundred feet deep; a most incredible exaggeration! Pomponius Mela, one of the best geographers of antiquity, reduces the circumference of the lake Mœris to twenty thousand paces; and the accounts of modern travellers make it only twelve or fifteen leagues. * Thus we see into what mistakes the Ancients lead us, when we receive their testimony without examination.

Fables told of Sesostris.

What is related of Sesostris deserves as little credit. The father of that conqueror, being informed of the fate of his son by an oracle, gave him such an education as was best calculated to make him a hero. All the children who were born on the same day with Sesostris, were bred up to use violent exercises, and to endure military fatigues. He was scarcely mounted on the throne after his father's death, when he undertook the conquest of the world. His young companions, to the number of seventeen hundred, † were appointed officers

* Lucas's Voyages, vol. iii.

† The author of *The Origin of Laws, &c.* proves, by a judicious calculation, that if the number is just according to Diodorus, there should have been 60 millions of inhabitants in Egypt. There are reckoned only 27 millions.

in his army, which consisted of six hundred thousand foot, twenty-four thousand horse, and twenty-seven thousand war-chariots. A numerous fleet covered the sea, although the Egyptians, from superstition, abhorred sailing. Sesostris first subdued Ethiopia, then passed into Asia, penetrating farther into the Indies than had been done by Bacchus or Hercules. He attacked Scythia, Colchis, and Thrace; and being obliged to return, though without having derived any advantage from his victories, he found a conspiracy formed against him by his brother Danaus or Armais. Having dispersed it, he employed his whole attention to the making his people happy, after having carried destruction, and all the horrors of war, to so great a distance. Magnificent temples, innumerable canals, immense causeways, upon which towns were built, but more particularly the institution of good laws, are the monuments of his profound wisdom. It is likewise remarked, that he learnt politics and the art of governing from Mercury.

His barbarous pride.

Nevertheless, we are told, at the same time, that when he went to the temple, his chariot was drawn by vanquished princes, on purpose to display his grandeur; but it could only serve as a proof of his egregious barbarity. It is said, that, to spare his own people, he employed none but foreigners and captives in the execution of his works; and he might thereby be entitled to our praise, if humanity did not reproach him with sacrificing such multitudes to his iniquitous ambition.

Trifling conjecture about Sesostris.

As the slightest resemblance is sufficient sometimes for the learned to erect systems,

Father Tournemin, and Rollin after him, judge that Sesostris is probably that King of Egypt who first oppressed the people of Israel. What probability is there that such a fierce and formidable conqueror could say of the Israelites, *they are more and mightier than we?* * All that seems to me to be depended on is, that the Egyptians had a king of the name of Sesostris; that that prince did some remarkable things, and was a conqueror and legislator; but as to his conquests, and other circumstances of his life, we know scarce any thing but contradictory fables. From his time the kingdom went continually to decay, which is the common consequence of acquiring too extensive dominion.

The Egyptian history becomes clearer. Psammeticus.

The continuation of the Egyptian history, such as we have it from Herodotus, who received his information from the priests of that country, is equally fabulous; but that darkness was a little dispersed in the reign of Psammeticus, about six hundred and seventy years before Jesus Christ. That prince opened his ports to foreigners, and his people carried on commerce with the Greeks; yet even in this period Herodotus mentions a very singular absurdity. He assures us, that Psammeticus, being desirous to know what nation in the world was of greatest antiquity, thought proper to have two children so brought up that they could never hear a single word spoken. At two years old, they both at once cried out *beccos*, which in the Phrygian language signifies bread, and from that time the Egyptians yielded the claim of higher antiquity to the Phrygians; a very extraordinary experiment, says

* Exodus, ch. i. v. 9.

Rollin, *if however the fact deserves to be credited.* It was well that the French author did not adopt the fable of Herodotus, which he relates with all its circumstances. Goropius Becanus, one of the learned, has gone still farther, and from the same story brings a proof that the high Dutch is the mother-language, because *becker* in that language signifies a baker.

Undertaking of Nechos.

Nechos, the son of Psammeticus, undertook to dig a canal of communication between the river Nile and the Red Sea. This great project was ascribed to Sesostris, but the execution must have proved fatal, if it is true, as some authors allege, that the level of the Red Sea is higher than the country of Egypt; however, Nechos is said to have renounced the scheme after having lost a hundred and twenty thousand men in the attempt. During his reign, and by his orders, some Phœnician navigators sailed round the coasts of Africa.

Amasis famous about 570 years before Christ.

His son Apries was dethroned by Amasis, whose reign was greatly celebrated, because he favoured commerce, and induced the Greeks to come into his kingdom. He was visited by Solon; and Pythagoras got himself initiated about that time in the Egyptian mysteries. Although Amasis was established on his throne, he observed that the obscurity of his birth exposed him to a degree of contempt; and the method which he tried to dispel this prejudice, is very remarkable. He caused a statue of the Divinity to be formed out of a gold cistern, in which not only he, but his guests, used to have their feet washed, and it very soon became the object of the people's worship and adoration. Having assembled the Egyptians some time

after, he told them that the God whom they worshipped had been formerly destined to the meanest uses; he therefore concluded that they ought to respect him as their king, whatever was his origin. Undoubtedly the prudence of his government contributed much more to fix the veneration of the people.

Egypt subdued by the Persians.

The reign of Psammeticus, son of Amasis, is the period when that famous monarchy was subdued. Cambyses, king of Persia, the son of Cyrus, reduced it, as we shall have occasion to mention in another place, about five hundred and twenty-five years before the Christian era. The God Apis was killed, the temples reduced to ashes, and the priests scourged with ignominy. Egypt continued enslaved or tributary to the Persians, till Alexander overthrew the throne of Cyrus: It then was formed into a new monarchy, which will be mentioned in its proper place.

Let us proceed to subjects more worthy of attention. The government, laws, religion, customs, the arts and sciences of the Egyptians, deserve our regard. Let us examine them like men who search for fundamental truths, rather than for events,

CHAP. II.

OF THE GOVERNMENT AND LAWS OF THE EGYPTIANS.

Origin of civil government.

When men in a savage state first united and formed themselves into societies; when experience convinced them that, by submitting to laws, they could acquire strength, and with less liberty enjoy more happiness; they then chose a chief, whose power was limited by certain stipulations. Monarchy was the kind of government to be found among all the ancient nations. Simplicity made it suitable to the customs and wants of early times, and it seems to have had its source from paternal authority. Several families forming one society, were governed like a single family; and the duty of a king was to defend and guide his subjects as a father would his children. It then became necessary that some individual should command, and they submitted to kings.

Progress of monarchy.

But royalty at first was only the shadow of what it necessarily must be after a time. The more the people became polished, the more they were in general pliant and obedient. On the one hand, strength and political skill; on the other, the common good and general consent of the people, gradually increased the royal power. That which was sometimes usurpation at first, became just, by procuring the sanction of the laws and general approbation. Mankind never willingly bear the yoke of tyranny, but they

easily accustom themselves to serve as a master, the man whom they look upon as a protector. The crown, which, being the gift of the people, was at first elective, could not fail in time to become commonly hereditary, because public tranquillity requires an order of succession. Thus, the valuable right of governing a whole people, is inherited like that of paternal property, and, although attended with some inconveniencies, yet ought to be submitted to, that greater evils may be avoided.

Crown hereditary.

Thus the monarchy was established in Egypt from time immemorial, where it was subject to the laws, which controlled even the most minute actions of the prince. His court, according to their system, could not be composed but of people of the most acknowledged merit, which was an excellent means of banishing vice and flattery, if it could have continued practicable. The provisions for his table, and even the employment of his time, were regulated with a most rigid prudence. The people had too great a respect for him to reproach him for any impropriety of conduct; but he was acquainted with his faults indirectly. Every morning, when he came to the temple, the chief priest pronounced a discourse upon the royal virtues, describing, in the most lively colours, the excesses into which surprise or ignorance might hurry a prince, supposing him incapable of falling into them of his own accord, and loading with imprecations whoever misled him by improper advice. When the sacrifice was at an end, they continued to instruct him, by reading the most excellent maxims, and such pieces of history as were best calculated to inspire him

The King of Egypt subjected to the laws.

with a love of virtue. Religion, which was held in the highest reverence in Egypt, could make this practice of the greatest effect; and subduing the haughty hearts of sovereigns to a proper sense of their duty, is the most honourable triumph for religion. It is here evident, that, at this time, the priests governed almost every thing in the kingdom.

Custom of judging the dead, even their kings.

The custom of judging the kings, as well as the meanest of the people, after their death, was boasted of as an excellent institution. Every one had a right to appear as an accuser, and the people were the judges; if the proofs against the dead person appeared decisive, he was deprived of the rights of interment. By this means, the sovereigns found that they were acountable to their subjects for their actions; and the idea of being exposed to such a trial, ought to make them respect men, and regard their own duty; even if we were to suppose (which I very much doubt) that the people durst attempt to tarnish the memory of a wicked prince, if it was the interest of his successor to defend him.

Prejudice rendered this custom useful.

Notwithstanding the impression which was made by the dread of leaving a character of dishonour behind them, this salutary custom derived its principal utility, perhaps, from a trifling and absurd opinion. It is said, that the Egyptians believed that the soul remained attached to the body until its putrefaction; they looked upon interment as essential to their future happiness; and they hoped, by the help of embalming, they would survive their bodies in their tombs, for a number of ages. The world is often governed by prejudices, and it would

be well if they were directed to the good of the public. Thus the persuasion that future happiness or misery could depend upon the living, became one of the mainsprings of political government united to their system of religion.

The kingdom divided into departments.

Historians have attributed to Sesostris the division of Egypt into thirty-six *nômes* or departments, which he trusted to those men who were the most worthy of governing. Nothing is more necessary for a great kingdon, where the eye of the prince requires the assistance of so many others. The lands were divided between the king, the priests, and the soldiery. Such a division proclaims despotism and superstition, rather than an equitable government. It was undoubtedly very proper that the defenders of the country should be personally interested in its preservation, because the holding of possessions was a motive to inspire them with courage; but so extensive a property could not fail to infuse a spirit of effeminacy. The Egyptians were a cowardly people, almost always enslaved. Mercenaries, subject to proper discipline, would have been of more value to the state, than these soldiers, who were born rather to enjoy the comforts of life, than to endure the fatigues of war.

Great power of the priests.

As to the priests, their immense possessions were looked upon with the more reverence, as they pretended that they held them of Isis herself. The third of the lands, joined to the respect which a regard for religion inspired for them, with an exemption from all imposts and public burdens, rendered them so powerful, that the authority of the priesthood could not

be counterbalanced by the civil power; and it is impossible to look upon the public institutions, but as the work of their hands. They governed the kings and the people; they were at the head of the council; the principal dignities, the administration of justice, the archives and annals; in one word, the laws and opinions were in some degree in their possession. I leave it then to be judged, whether their traditions, collected by the Greeks, deserve much to be credited.

Contradiction about taxes.

Some historians tell us, that the lands of the military were not subject to taxation, any more than the lands held by the priests. Upon whom then did the taxes fall, or were there no taxes? On the other hand, Herodotus tells us, that Sesostris divided the lands, and imposed a tax in proportion to the quantity possessed by every individual. It would only be loss of time, to endeavour to clear up such contradictions, which are so common in ancient history.

Manner of administering justice.

The Egyptians knew that the happiness of a well regulated state, depended above all things upon the faithful administration of justice, without which, if crimes went unpunished, the common ruin could not fail to ensue. Their grand tribunal was composed of thirty judges, selected from the three capitals, Heliopolis, Memphis, and Thebes; Egypt being divided into three parts. The prince, when he installed the judges, made them take an oath, that they would not obey him if he commanded them to pronounce an unjust sentence. He provided for their support, and no speck of selfishness could stain so noble a profession. Lest the power and arts of eloquence should prevail over equity, their

business was carried on by writing; and even the manner in which they pronounced their decrees was accompanied with something solemn and holy; the president touching with a figure of truth the person whose right was acknowledged, it was never doubted that truth had dictated the sentence. Such is the picture drawn by historians, which, if it is not after nature, is at least apparently after the common rules and principles. When we come to speak of the manners of this people, some doubts of the propriety of the encomiums which have been lavished upon those magistrates may arise. The magistracy, and even the priesthood, were always tinctured with the prevailing opinions of the people.

Laws of Egypt.

Of all the benefits of society, the laws are unquestionably the greatest, as being the source of the rest. At a time when scarce any other nation was acquainted with civil government, the laws were arrived at great perfection in Egypt. Menes had the honour of being supposed to be the institutor of marriage. A brother and sister could be married, because Osiris and Isis had set the example; and thus superstition rendered sacred what sound morals should proscribe. Polygamy was permitted, except to the priests; yet it appears certain, notwithstanding the universal practice in eastern countries, that it is neither conformable to the intentions of nature, nor the interests of society; for the number of females is nearly equal to the males, and the education of children requires that the father and mother should be closely united. They punished adultery severely, as a crime most injurious to society in its effects, since it strikes at

the very foundation of civil order. The man who was guilty was punished with a thousand lashes, and the woman had her nose cut off. Soldiers who were guilty of cowardice were punished only with some marks of infamy, as shame ought to be more terrible than death to a military man. The false accuser was subject to the punishment which the accused was exposed to have suffered if he had been found guilty. They who were guilty of forgery, or counterfeiting money, had their hands cut off. The security of men's lives being the first object of legislation, homicide was punished with death, even when committed upon a slave. Whoever could have saved the life of a man attacked by murderers, and did not do it, was equally condemned to suffer death. If they could not prevent the murder, they were to give information of the guilty person under pain of being scourged. The town next to the place where the dead body was found, was obliged to bury it, and be at the expense of a costly funeral, which was an additional motive for watching the safety of the people. A father who murdered his own child, was only condemned to hold the dead body for three days and nights grasped in his arms, in the middle of the guard who surrounded him; judging undoubtedly that the power of nature and the disgrace must prove his severest executioner. Women with child, according to the dictates of humanity, were not executed until they were delivered, and the laws ordained that all the children were to be preserved and educated. We shall see some nations, without any scruple, exceedingly inhuman in this respect, either from the difficulty

Education of the children.

of procuring sustenance, or from some other motive.

Laws concerning debtors.

Every individual was looked upon as belonging to the state; and therefore the property, and not the person of the debtor, was to be answerable for his debts; so that they were unacquainted with those violences which occasioned so much trouble in ancient Rome. Asychis found an effectual method of securing fidelity in commerce by ordering the debtor to pledge the embalmed body of his father with his creditor, and if he died without redeeming it, he was to be deprived of the right of interment. This was binding down the Egyptians by the strongest tie, since opinion had absolute power over them.

Laws against idleness and misconduct.

One of the best laws is that of Amasis, by which every individual was obliged annually to declare his profession, and by what means he subsisted, to the governor of the province; and every one was exposed to suffer death who could not give an account of his conduct, or show that he lived by honest means. This punishment was undoubtedly very severe, since there was no other could be inflicted for the most enormous crimes; but the intention of the law was excellent. It imposed the necessity of being useful; banished idleness, fraud, and other plagues of society; and made every citizen accountable to the state for his actions. Solon made it a law at Athens. Is it then impossible, in these days, to reduce a set of wretches whose idleness makes them dangerous members of the community, to an honest employment, without punishing them with death, contrary to the law of nature? might not some

real advantage be derived to the public from their chastisement?

Abuse of hereditary professions.

The ancient law which established different ranks among the citizens, entirely distinct from one another, and which obliged the children to follow the professions of their fathers, certainly does not deserve all the encomiums which have been bestowed upon it. 'They execut-'ed better,' says Bossuet, 'that which they had 'always seen done, and which was their sole 'employment during their infancy.' They executed better, to be sure, if they had the requisite talents, and followed good models. Do we find at present that the best handicraftsmen, or the more renowned artists, are those who had a workshop for their cradle? What shall I say of those professions where study, reflection and genius are more indispensably necessary? A similar law in Europe would have perpetuated a grievance; for, as was the case in Egypt, it would have placed an invincible obstruction in the way of every attempt to arrive at perfection, and would have chained down the greatest part of those geniuses who have enlightened and done honour to human nature, in the dust, or at least in obscurity. True policy will never attempt to restrain emulation; it encourages the necessary arts, but more particularly agriculture, sufficiently to leave no room to be apprehensive of their being neglected; it estimates the different abilities of men, and assigns to each his proper rank; but, far from raising up a hateful distinction between the different classes of citizens, it endeavours to unite them into one body; and the rather, because if any one class

was to increase too much, it would prove fatal to those of fewer numbers. The confounding of ranks is a necessary evil in great monarchies, and it is the duty of lawgivers to guard against the principal inconveniences. According to some writers, every profession was honoured in Egypt; but that is another mistake; for they detested that of a shepherd, though their flocks were numerous, and the pastoral life had so many charms for men in the early ages.

Law favourable for thieves.

We may observe many other errors in the legislation of that celebrated nation. Diodorus Siculus tells us, that the thieves had a chief with whom all their stolen goods were deposited, and that by applying to him, and specifying the nature and circumstances of the robbery, people were sure of recovering what they lost, only by paying a quarter of the value; and this custom was passed into a law: so that we see theft in some degree authorized and rewarded. The testimony of Diodorus is to be suspected on many occasions; but will the admirers of Egyptian wisdom reject his testimony? Let us acknowledge that both the good and the bad are equally to be doubted in many essential points.

We come now to examine abuses of a more extraordinary kind, those of superstition.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE RELIGION AND MANNERS OF THE EGYPTIANS.

The advantage of religion.

If we look upon religion only as one of the strongest links of society, and one of the most affecting motives to attach us to our duty, it is entitled to our highest regard, abstracted from the love and gratitude we owe to the Supreme Being; but, unhappily, superstition degrades and debases it, and, by abusing the greatest possible good, produces the greatest calamities. If we were to attempt to cure mankind of a contagious distemper with which almost the whole race are afflicted, history affords numberless examples, which cannot be too much insisted on.

Superstition debases it.

The Deity manifests himself in his works. If we but contemplate the structure of the universe, the organization of its inhabitants, the order and harmony of its immense spheres, we cannot fail to acknowledge and adore the omnipotent and sole creator. Yet religion, which at first was pure and simple, has been every where stifled under a heap of monstrous extravagances. The human mind, instead of humbling itself before an infinite Being, places some ridiculous phantoms in the room of the Almighty, whose greatness is beyond its powers to conceive; and imposture, fear, and idle fancy, realize and multiply those phantoms incessantly. Sometimes even absurdity, under the

awful name of religion, subdues superior understandings, and levels them with the servile minds of the ignorant vulgar. In proportion as men set up ridiculous deities, that are more mischievous than beneficent, they impose some barbarous senseless duties upon themselves, either with a view of pleasing, or averting the anger of those wretched objects of their adoration. Thus superstition, under a thousand different shapes, becomes the reproach and scourge of the human race.

Notwithstanding superstition, an idea of a Supreme Being preserved in Egypt.

Some men of superior understanding in Egypt preserved the idea of a Supreme Being, to whom they gave different names, and whose attributes were represented by them under different symbols. Plutarch mentions the following inscription on an Egyptian temple: *I am all that has been, is, and ever shall be; no mortal has ever raised up the veil with which I am covered.* And the following still subsists: *To thee, who, being one, art all things, the Goddess Isis.* * They that were initiated in the religious mysteries of Egypt, were taught to believe in the unity of God; but it is equally certain that from thence the senseless pagan fables were derived, which contaminated the divine worship with disgraceful follies, and superstition plunged them into the extremes of madness and stupidity.

Egyptian idolatry.

They probably began by worshiping the stars, but more particularly the son and moon, which were known to them by the names of Osiris and Isis. This is the most natural origin of idolatry. In losing sight of the Creator, the

* Universal History, I. 575.

transition was easy to mistake the stars for the rulers of nature, which they enlivened and cherished. Admiration or gratitude made them, in the next place, deify mortals; and they concluded all, by worshipping animals, which is a kind of religious reverence, in whatever light it can be viewed, that must evidently appear to be the last stage of superstitious delirium. The silence of historians forbids our giving credit to Juvenal, when he accuses the Egyptians of even worshipping plants, and more particularly the Onion.

Animal Deities.

Apis, the principal divinity which represented Sesostris, was a black bull with peculiar spots. The honours which they paid to him, the expense for his support, the despair which was expressed at his death, and the anxiety to find a successor, would seem incredible, if any thing of that kind can be so. The cat, the ichneumon, the dog, the ibis, the falcon, the wolf, and the crocodile, were among the number of their deities. They spared no expense in supporting them magnificently, and people of the highest rank thought it an honour to serve them: the pomp at their funerals was of a piece with these ridiculous instances of profusion.

Excessive zeal for these animals.

To kill one of these sacred animals, though involuntarily, was reckoned one of the most enormous crimes, and the guilty person was always punished with death. A Roman soldier, notwithstanding the interposition of the king, and the terror of the Roman name, was torn in pieces by the populace, for having killed a cat by accident. Diodorus, who relates this story, adds, that, in the time of a famine,

the Egyptians would rather feed upon one another, than touch one of these creatures.

Divisions occasioned by this worship.

They likewise had the misfortune to differ in their opinions and religious ceremonies. In one place they worshipped the crocodile, in another the ichneumon, the enemy of the crocodile; in one province they were afraid to kill a sheep, and lived upon the flesh of goats; while in another, goats were superstitiously respected, and they lived upon mutton; from whence sprung reproaches of impiety, hatred, and quarrels. According to Diodorus, this was owing to the policy of a prudent king, who, to prevent his subjects from revolting, sowed discord in the provinces, by giving to each of them a different deity: but supposing this to be true, he must be reckoned an enemy to his subjects; for, by exposing them to religious quarrels, they were in danger of intestine and irreconcilable wars.

Different Egyptian superstitions.

When once superstition takes root among men, it shows itself by springing up in a thousand hideous shapes. In the beginning of their establishment, the Egyptians sacrificed human victims: they reckoned it a duty neither to eat beans nor wheat, and their bread was made of *olyra*, probably rice. They abhorred some animals as unclean, especially hogs. They looked upon foreigners with a religious aversion, and to such a degree, that they durst not eat with them, nor make use of any utensil belonging to them, nor even put a bit of meat into their mouths which had been cut with one of their knives. On the feast of Isis, both men and women scourged themselves; and committed most horrid indecencies on that of Diana.

They consulted their animal deities as oracles. Circumcision was practised from time immemorial in Egypt; and Pythagoras was obliged to submit to it, that he might enjoy the conversation of the priests.

Excessive power of the Egyptian priests.

These priests, who might have been of the greatest use in improving the manners of the people, enslaved and governed them by superstition; and, by being the sole depositaries of science, made them believe whatever they pleased. Their excessive power shows that the springs of government were forged by them, or that they made the people subject to a ruling power, connected with their order. When the reigning family happened to be extinct, a priest was raised to the throne; a military man might be elected, but it was necessary that he should be admitted into the priesthood. Sethon, priest of Vulcan, having by this means obtained the crown, imprudently affected to despise the soldiery, whom he deprived of their privileges; but when he had occasion afterwards for their assistance, both officers and men refused to defend him; so that, according to the Egyptian fables, Vulcan was obliged to save him by a miracle.

Policy of these priests.

Undoubtedly the Egyptian priests in general knew the folly of some of the errors which they taught; for their secret theology, though mixed with fable, was much superior to the popular credulity; they even had most sublime ideas of the Infinite Being. But wherefore had they secret doctrines to keep the people in ignorance? or why conceal the most important truths from the public? why leave them to stupify themselves in fatal blindness?

or wherefore dishonour God by follies, or torment mankind by ridiculous chimeras? It was false or cruel policy. I grant, that it was extremely difficult to inform the minds of such a superstitious people; for, in attempting to work their cure, there was room to apprehend that they might not only be hurt, but enraged: however, beneficent truth insinuates itself every where, and by wise precautions always succeeds. It is not to be doubted that the priests introduced mysteries, only because they found established superstitions were useful to them. The small number of candidates whom they condescended to initiate, did not obtain that favour until they had undergone long trials; as they were desirous, in the first place, to be ascertained of the person; and, in the next, to give an appearance of greater consequence to the mysteries.

Manners of the Egyptians.

The manners of the Egyptians were as fantastical as their religion. Respect for parents and for old age, gratitude for benefits, love of peace, and an attachment to old customs, made their principal virtues; to which they added great faults and a number of vices. Idle and effeminate, they employed themselves in spinning; while the women, who were mistresses at home, likewise managed their business abroad. They obliged the female and not the male children to take care of their parents; they despised and hated foreigners; they fancied nothing could be good or beautiful which was not of their own country: prejudices exceedingly injurious to society, and destructive of the public good. In vain does Plato celebrate their dislike to novelty; and some of the

National vanity; hatred of novelty.

greatest geniuses fruitlessly declare to us with enthusiasm, that 'a new custom was a wonder 'in Egypt, where every thing was constantly 'carried on in the same tract where that pre-'cision, with which they attended to the exe-'cution of small matters, supported those of 'the greatest consequence; and accordingly, 'that no people had ever so long preserved 'their laws and customs.'* Where is the merit in preserving bad laws mixed with good, ridiculous practices with respectable customs, and the most stupid superstitions with religious sentiments? To refute such a paradox, nothing is wanted but the example of Egypt, upon which these writers rest their opinions. There, every thing was constantly carried on in the same manner; which is a sufficient reason for so many being badly executed. Abuses are not corrected, laws, customs, or arts cannot be brought to perfection, without changes. Novelty is frequently hurtful, but it is likewise often necessary; and without it neither the Egyptians nor any other people could have emerged out of barbarism; without it, what purposes could our reason serve, which, by its gradual progress, should contribute to the good of society? The great point is to introduce novelties with prudence; for frequently the worst errors are improper attempts to correct errors.

Novelty often necessary.

One custom, which Herodotus tells us was established in Egypt, will not help us to judge favourably of their manners. At their meals, and even at their parties of pleasure, the figure

A figure of death introduced at entertainments.

* Bossuet's Discourse upon Universal History.

of death in wood, or, according to some authors, a dead body, was introduced in a coffin, and presented to each of the company with these words, *Drink and rejoice, for to this complexion you will come at last.*

CHAPTER IV.

ARTS AND SCIENCES OF THE EGYPTIANS.

The first arts invented in Egypt.

THE Egyptians owe their reputation chiefly to their skill in the arts and sciences, of which they certainly were the inventors, and to them Europe is indebted for the seeds of knowledge. The invention of the plough, an instrument of greater use to man than all the discoveries of the learned, since agriculture is the parent of society, has been ascribed to Osiris. The first ploughs being made of wood, without the help of iron or any other metal, according to the observation of M. Goguet, tillage must have been first introduced in some light soils, such as that of the country of Egypt.

Iron a long time unknown.

We may in this place take notice of an astonishing fact concerning arts and industry. Iron, of all the metals, was last discovered, and last employed in mechanics; the want of it was supplied by tempered copper. Arms were made of brass, and even silver became common; while iron, which was destined by nature for so many valuable purposes, lay buried and unknown: the reason is, that the art of purifying this metal is of all others the most difficult.

This remark invites us to make some reflections. Being too much habituated to the enjoyment of those advantages with which we are constantly surrounded, we do not attend to the efforts of industry which were necessary for their production, nor think of the immense multitudes who have been deprived of them. Nevertheless, there have been ages, and there are still large and flourishing countries, where bread, the most common of all food, never was known. By what astonishing progress have men been capable of raising themselves from a wretched savage state, to that degree of improvement and perfection, which the greatest part enjoy without being sensible of the advantage! Necessity made man industrious. He very soon discovered some rude methods for supplying himself with food and raiment, and guarding against the severities of the weather, to which better methods gradually succeeded. Chance seconded industry, and has frequently cleared the way. Let us not imagine, like an ancient philosopher (Posidonius), that the art of making bread was discovered, by reflecting that the grains of corn chewed, without any previous preparation, were ground by the teeth, their substance tempered with the saliva, and, being moved about in this state, and collected by the tongue, descended into the stomach, and there received a suitable degree of baking. According to this ingenious system, the art of grinding, kneading, and baking in the oven, must have been suddenly discovered by a subtile combination of ideas! To this ought to have been joined, the discovery of leaven, which is still a more difficult contrivance.

Reflections upon the origin of arts.

Chance has contributed to make discoveries.

Such systems are only the work of fancy. Probably some method of making flour, tempering it with water, forming it into paste, and baking it by some means or other, was known, before any reflections were made upon the nature and effects of the animal operations. The necessary arts have been produced, rather by a kind of instinct than from reasoning. The first attempts were certainly awkward, but frequent trials gradually introduced superior methods; yet, without a concourse of fortunate incidents, perhaps even the most indispensable necessaries of life had not been discovered.

The use of fire long unknown.

Even fire was long unknown to man, or rather the art of preserving and renewing it. The Greeks supposed it came down from heaven, as the fable of Prometheus testifies. In the year 1521, when Magellan landed on the Marianne Islands, the savages imagined that element was an animal which fed upon wood, and, having been burnt by touching it, they would no longer look upon it but at a distance, dreading lest they should be hurt by its bite, or the violence of its breathing. From this discovery, to the knowledge of employing metals, but more particularly iron, which must be melted again and again, forged and heated, and forged again, before it can be formed into any utensil, the interval seems dismaying. Iron abounds in Peru and Mexico, yet it was entirely unknown in these countries, though gold shone in their temples, and was employed to display the magnificence of their princes. In one word, that which appears extremely simple and easy, and in fact is become so by habit, yet in its origin is a subject of admiration, whether we consider

it as the precious gift of nature, or the effect of wonderful industry.

The arts cultivated in Egypt from time immemorial.

To whatever period we look back in the Egyptian history, even to the time of the patriarchs, we find them acquainted with the polite arts and the refinements of luxury. Fine stuffs, embroidery, rich vases, and the whole apparatus of magnificence, proclaimed the talents of the Egyptians. But, in a more particular manner, they were remarkable for their architecture, though it was in a bad taste, as we shall have occasion to observe in another place. What the ancients have told us of these works, would seem excessively exaggerated, if some monuments of them did not remain at this day, and of which I shall give an idea in a few words.

The pyramids.

The famous pyramids, which a number of writers imagine to have been built before the deluge, still resist the injuries of time, which has destroyed so many empires. There are still three of them remaining, at some leagues distance from Cairo, where Memphis formerly stood. The largest of them makes a square of two thousand six hundred and forty feet in circuit, each side of the base being six hundred and sixty feet, and the perpendicular height about five hundred, terminated by a platform of about sixteen. Many stones of this enormous edifice are thirty feet long, four feet high, and three feet broad. It is alleged, that the subterranean works are still more considerable. According to Herodotus, a hundred thousand workmen were employed for thirty years without intermision, either in preparing the materials, or constructing the work. And an in-

scription informs us, that the vegetables with which they were fed, cost sixteen hundred talents, which is about 289,379*l.* English money.

Superstition and policy occasioned the building of pyramids.

Pliny the naturalist, and several other writers, inveigh against the foolish vanity, which, if we may believe them, prompted the sovereigns of that country to such ruinous undertakings. Some less judicious writers have imagined, that the pyramids were granaries, built by Joseph for the seven years of plenty, an imagination which is perhaps one of the most proper, for characterizing those people who are wedded to systems. The pyramids were certainly tombs, by means of which, it is conjectured, the kings, who were tainted with the prejudices of their country, wished to make themselves immortal, as they would thus secure for their bodies, a habitation inaccessible, and proof against the attacks of time. Besides superstition, probably a desire of preventing disturbances, was another motive for imposing such tedious tasks upon the people; or perhaps the taste for immense masses being natural to the Egyptians, a first example was sufficient to introduce the custom. But, whatever was the reason, it is not useless to remark, that the princes who caused these pyramids to be constructed, became so hateful by the oppressive stated labour which they imposed upon their subjects, that they did not even enjoy those tombs, nor save their names from oblivion. We should not therefore judge of the Egyptian government, by the idea some historians give of it, from a few good laws, which frequently were not observed.

Egyptian mummies.

The superstitious desire of preserving their

bodies after death, was one of the strongest passions among the Egyptians. Accordingly, no nation has ever equalled their skill in embalming, as we may see by their mummies, which last for ever. There are grottos cut in rocks that are filled with them. What will not prejudice inspire? To respect even the ashes of our parents, is a natural and laudable sentiment; but this is rather the work of superstition. Rollin says upon this subject, that *the custom of burning the dead, has in it something cruel and barbarous, because it is hastening to destroy the remains of people who were the most dear to us.* He can fancy nothing better conceived than the usual practice of burying; as if it was more humane to deliver over their remains to worms and corruption. It is right to take notice of erroneous opinions, that we may learn to employ our own reason, without being the slave of other people's judgment.

Egyptians wanted taste.

It continues still a very common prejudice to praise the taste of the Egyptians. According to M. Bossuet, *In the works of art they were fond of a boldness subjected to fixed rules, and sought what was new and astonishing only in the infinite variety of nature.* But does not their love for gigantic works contradict this encomium? The head of a sphynx is still to be seen, which is twenty-six feet high, and thirty-five feet round. Neither design, proportion, nor any thing pleasing is to be found in those astonishing piles which have resisted the lapse of time, their enormous size making their principal merit.

Labyrinth.

We shall not attempt to describe the Labyrinth, that famous palace, which is said to have

been built by twelve kings, who reigned all at the same time, about six hundred years before Jesus Christ. We are told, that a single enclosure contained three thousand apartments, which all communicated with one another by numberless windings. The Obelisks are better known. There were several of them a hundred and eighty feet high, consisting of a single piece. The Obelisk of Rameses was much larger; and, if we may believe the ancients, was executed by twenty thousand men. It is to be seen at Rome, to which it was transported by the Emperor Constantius, and afterwards set up by Pope Sixtus Quintus. As to the wonders which are related of the city of Thebes, and the hundred gates which Homer gives it, from each of which ten thousand soldiers could issue, (though Herodotus reckons only forty-one thousand in all Egypt), it is a fabulous exaggeration, disgraceful to history. * Let us be content with bestowing our admiration upon what deserves it, the industry of the Egyptians, which could take such enormous stones from the sides of mountains, and, by means of canals upon the Nile, transport them to considerable distances, and erect them without the help of modern machinery.

Obelisks.

Thebes.

Sciences. The progress which they made in the arts, proves their skill in the sciences. There is an intimate connexion, and a necessary correspondence between these. Wherever the arts flourish, a number of happy geniuses are excited to think and employ their time in deep

* Homer says only two hundred, with their horses and chariots. Vid. Iliad, l. ix. line 383.

researches, so that by their zeal in acquiring knowledge, which is speedily communicated, new sources of riches and improvement are opened for artists. When we see the Egyptians surveying their lands with precision, distributing the waters of the Nile by numberless canals, measuring the increase of the river with exactness, making and employing all sorts of machinery, but more particularly measuring time, and calculating the revolutions of the stars, we cannot doubt of their being acquainted with the principles of mechanics, geometry, and several parts of mathematics.

Necessity of astronomy.

Whether astronomy had its rise among them, or among the Chaldeans or elsewhere, is a question which it is impossible to decide with certainty, and is not worth the trouble of examining; but these two nations, of all the ancients, chiefly cultivated that necessary science, not only for geography, navigation, and chronology, but likewise for agriculture, and preserving order in civil life; it being impossible to regulate the operations of husbandry, or the business of society and religious exercises, without an exact division of time, and a knowledge of the periodical revolutions of the heavenly bodies. The Egyptians seem to have been the first who divided the year into twelve months, and the observation of the phases of the moon easily produced this discovery. At first, the year was purely lunar, of three hundred and fifty-four days; which is so different from the true course of the sun, that, in less than seventeen years, the order of the seasons was reversed. It became necessary to consult the sun, and observe his return to certain fixed

stars, and then to measure the year by his course. As it was difficult to ascertain it precisely, they fixed it at three hundred and sixty days, only by giving thirty days to each month; but at the end of thirty-four years the seasons had changed places; at last, after studying the subject afresh, they formed the year of three hundred and sixty-five days; and even the Egyptian astronomers discovered, that the revolution of the sun was some hours longer.

The extent of their astronomy.

They knew the Zodiac, which they divided into twelve signs of thirty degrees; a discovery equally ancient and difficult. They were acquainted with the motion of the planets, the cause of eclipses, and calculated the eclipses of the sun. They imagined that the moon was a sort of ethereal country, and probably had acquired an idea of a plurality of worlds, and the motion of the earth, since their disciples the Pythagoreans have transmitted to us some notions of these two systems. One proof of their skill still exists, which is, that the four sides of the great pyramid correspond exactly with the four cardinal points.

Their superstition made them abhor the sea.

The more we have room to be surprised that men were capable of acquiring such extensive knowledge without the help of glasses, pendulums or Arabic ciphers, the less can we conceive the silly prejudices which clouded the science of the Egyptians. Though they ascribed the invention of masts and sails to Isis, they detested the sea, and navigation from an idle superstition. In the sea, they beheld the emblem of Typhon, who was the enemy of Osiris; and from such a theological reverie proceeded their dislike to that element. The priests held

it in such horror, that they eat neither fish nor salt: it is therefore a probable conjecture, that the Egyptian colonies did not pass into Greece, but in Phenician ships. According to history, Sesostris was the first who attempted to surmount native prejudices by fitting out a fleet; and that conqueror had maps taken of every country over which he passed. If it had not been for him, geography, one of the principal studies of the priests, would have been confined to the extent of his own country. Is it not natural to imagine, that there was some political view in propagating such ridiculous opinions? The people might change their manners by having an intercourse with foreigners, and become less pliant to the yoke imposed by their priests.

Geography cultivated in Egypt.

The superstitious disposition of the Egyptians is to be traced even in their practice of medicine, which consisted at first in different recipes, handed down from father to son, and doubtless applied at random. They exposed the sick to the view of passengers, that they might have the benefit of their advice. These recipes being collected and deposited in the temples, a system of medical instruction was formed; and these sacred books contained precepts, which all were obliged to follow for the cure of diseases. If the physicians deviated from them, and their patients died, they were punished with death; which law was alone sufficient to kill numbers of sick. According to the testimony of Aristotle, it was forbidden to set the humours in motion, or to purge before the fourth day; and magical operations

Superstitious in their medical knowledge.

completed the absurdity; at least every thing gives room to believe it.

They never dissected a dead body.

The art of embalming the dead, in which the Egyptians were so perfectly skilled, shows that the study of botany was successfully cultivated; but not anatomy, though the panegyrists of the Egyptians say that it was. They never dissected dead bodies, nor even opened the heads to have them embalmed, looking upon them with a religious regard, but without endeavouring to find any useful instruction from them. What is still more extraordinary, whoever touched a dead body was detested; and they who performed the operation immediately fled, for fear of being knocked on the head. This prejudice still subsists among the Chinese, whose singular resemblance to the Egyptians we shall have occasion to observe. The history of mankind is almost always a history of the weakness of the human mind, notwithstanding the surprising proofs of sagacity and industry with which we are presented.

Philosophy.

The Egyptian philosophy is but little known. At one time it was confounded with theology; at another, it was attached to morals, which are of more importance than all speculative doctrines. It rose even to the Supreme Being, whom they represented under the figure of a man with a sceptre in his hand, and an egg coming out of his mouth. This egg is found to be a symbol of the world among the Chaldeans, Persians, Indians, Greeks, and Chinese. Such an uncommon idea probably was handed down from one people to another. Reason alone was sufficient to make them all acknowledge the great Architect of the Universe; but

to represent his work under the figure of an egg, is what the imagination could scarcely invent in several different countries.

Before we finish this article, let us take notice of that admirable invention, by which words and thoughts have been painted, by which the memorable things of antiquity have been preserved, and the immense heaps of truth and falsehood, with which the archives of the world are filled, communicated to all ages. Invention of writing.

Writing was at first only a representation of material objects; the figure of a tree was drawn to express a tree, and different figures to represent a complicated action or a mixture of things; this practice could not be of extensive use. It became necessary to abridge the art, to make it more simple, and to invent signs which could express the emotions of the soul, and the operations of the mind, &c. so that there should be emblems common to different objects. Such were the hieroglyphics, and for a long time they knew no other writing. The use of them was preserved by the Egyptian priests a long time after the invention of the alphabetical characters, on purpose to conceal their science from the vulgar. Hieroglyphics.

Nothing is more simple in appearance, nor more ingenious, than this last invention. A small number of characters, representing each vowel and each consonant separately, without almost any trouble, serves to express all our thoughts, and contains distinctly, in a very small space, what could not be done by an infinite number of hieroglyphics, but with obscurity and confusion. The date of this dis- Characters of the alphabet.

covery is so ancient that it is unknown; but it is imagined, that all the characters of the alphabet have sprung from the same source, notwithstanding their extreme difference. Our modern letters came from the Romans, the Roman from the Greeks, the Greek from the Phenicians, whose characters are the very same with those of the Samaritans. All these languages have a common alphabet, which was probably the Egyptian.*

The Egyptians have been too much admired.

By comparing the different details which we have just now given, we may conclude, that the Egyptians had genius and invention, but with little taste or judgment; that after they had made a rapid progress in arts and sciences, they stopped in the middle of their career, without being able to reach the object at which they aimed; they have been the instructors of almost all nations, but the slaves of their own customs; they had excellent laws intermixed with enormous grievances; their religion degenerated into absurd superstition, their love of peace into cowardice, their patriotism into foolish pride, and their false ideas of grandeur produced nothing but the gigantic; in fine, to judge of them with impartiality, we should abate much of the encomiums which have been lavished upon them by the Greeks, their imitators. But can we say with a modern author, '*That there were but two things tolerable in that* '*nation; the first was, that they who worshipped* '*an ox did not compel those that worshipped an* '*ape to change their religion; the second, that*

* See the Origin of Laws, Arts, and Sciences, by Goguet. Part I.

'*they always hatched chickens in ovens?*'* A stroke of humour does not deface the monuments of history. However, the difference between forcing a man to change his religion, and detesting him because of his following a different form of worship, or tearing him in pieces because he has accidentally killed a cat or a dog, &c. is too slight to do honour to the Egyptians.

* Diction. Philosoph. article *Apis*.

THE

ANCIENT HISTORY

OF THE

CHINESE.

Surprising antiquity claimed by the Chinese.

THE singular resemblance between the Chinese and Egyptians, presents us with a very curious subject of inquiry, which I shall content myself with touching slightly. The antiquities of China, like the Egyptian, are immersed in a chaos of fables, in which may be seen a succession of periods and imaginary dynasties comprehending millions of years. Before the time of Fo-hi, the founder of the empire, men are described as living like the beasts of the field, wandering up and down the forests, without thinking of any thing but sleep and food, devouring even the hair and feathers of animals whose blood they drunk, ignorant of marriage, and all kinds of law or decency: Nevertheless, the origin of the arts is said to be earlier than the times of which they have any certain knowledge.

How much their ancient history is to be doubted.

The learned men of China do not at present adopt a fabulous chronology. They confess, that, two hundred and thirteen years before Jesus Christ, Chi-hoam-ti, one of their empe-

rors, caused all their books of history to be destroyed, because the literati drew precedents from them against his haughtiness and his buildings. A complete body of history appeared about one hundred and fifty years after this period, the author of which does not pretend that he could find authority for more than eight hundred years back; however, the astronomical observations, rejected by some, and maintained by others, go to a much earlier period; and the Chinese reckon the first of them a hundred and fifty years before the Emperor Yao, who reigned, according to M. Freret, about two thousand one hundred and forty-five years before the Christian era. * Without entering into these discussions, or pronouncing upon the authenticity of the Chinese annals (which are so respectable in the eyes of the authors of the English Universal History, that they confound Noah with Fo-hi the first Emperor of China), let us display another more interesting system, though it is nevertheless still a system.

Their first astronomical observation.

M. de Guignes, of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres, maintains, that an Egyptian colony established itself in China, about one thousand one hundred and twenty-two years before Jesus Christ; that the emigrants carried the history of Egypt along with them, and that it has been grafted into the true history of China; that the two first dynasties of the Chinese annals are precisely the

System of M. de Guignes.

* According to the Hebrew chronology, this observation must be near about the time of the deluge, which is placed 2348 years before our era; but according to the Samaritan, it is about 700 years later.

same with those of the kings of Thebes in Upper Egypt. He observes, that the founder of the third is represented as a conqueror, who divided the provinces, and gave sovereignties to his friends, and the officers of his army. He adds, that the Chinese allow there are people to the westward of them, and beyond the Caspian Sea, of the same origin with themselves; and lastly, he insists upon the conformity of the Chinese characters with the Egyptian and Phenician letters, pretending that they are a kind of ciphers formed from these letters.

Resemblance of the Chinese with the Egyptians.

Though a number of the learned have particularly attacked the last article of his system, it must be allowed, that, in a number of things, these two nations have a great resemblance. The writing of the Chinese is nearly of the same nature with the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics, and they still more strongly resembled the Egyptians in their manners and customs. The same respect for their kings, their fathers and mothers; the same prejudice in favour of national merit and against foreigners; the same attention to agriculture; the same progress in arts and sciences, without either taste, or making any advance towards perfection; the same love for peace and tranquillity; the same courtesy, which was full of indispensable ceremony; the same superstitious attachment to ancient customs, and, of course, the same fetters to genius. The Chinese, like the Egyptians, admire nothing but what they do themselves, and continue the same methods which have been practised from time immemorial.

In Anson's voyage, we may see some particulars which mark their character sufficiently. When that admiral approached the coasts of China, an incredible number of fishing-boats hovered round his ship, which was superior to the whole naval power of their empire, yet not one creature seemed to pay the least attention to an object which certainly ought to have amazed them. But this is not the only proof of Chinese indifference, which is mentioned by that author.* 'It may perhaps be doubted,' says he, 'whether this cast of temper be the 'effect of nature or education; but, in either 'case, it is an incontestable symptom of a mean 'and contemptible disposition, and is alone 'a sufficient confutation of the extravagant 'praises which many prejudiced writers have 'bestowed on the ingenuity and capacity of 'this nation.' He afterwards † represents the Chinese as a knavish, hypocritical, cheating, cowardly people, whose morals and government are much more deserving of censure than praise. Notwithstanding the splendid encomiums which have been lavished upon the Chinese by many of the missionaries, there are a number of sensible writers at present of the same opinion with the author of that voyage.

Character of the Chinese, by the author of Anson's voyage.

Without ascribing their resemblance with the Egyptians to a doubtful cause, to the establishment of an Egyptian colony in the centre of Asia, there is still an important observation to be made. There are excellent principles of true wisdom to be found in the Chinese go-

Excellent regulations in China, but badly observed.

* Anson's Voyage, l. 33. ch. 6. † Ibid. ch. 10.

vernment, as well as in that of ancient Egypt; and if the emperor and the mandarins did their duty, China might serve as a model to the whole world; but, in the first place, the opinions of Fo, which are maintained by the Bonzes, a sort of monks of that country, have corrupted the sound morals and pure religion of Confucius, by foolish superstitions. In the second place, the mandarins, these governors and celebrated magistrates, frequently debased by a shameful attachment to their own interest, make a disgraceful traffic of justice and of the public good. Every thing depends upon the emperor; and he is the sole interpreter of the law. According to Montesquieu, he is despotic; and it is rather owing to the force of custom, than to the excellence of the laws, that he is not a tyrant.

Causes of the stability of the Chinese government.

If the Chinese empire is the richest in the world, and has existed for thousands of years, always been governed by the same principles, though conquered twice by the Tartars, this wonderful stability must be owing to the following causes: The opulence of the emperor, whose revenue is said to amount to about forty-four millions seven hundred and fifty thousand pounds of our money, leaves him without a motive for changing the constitution, or any desire of oppressing the people: The learned, who are the only persons that hold offices, are subjected to a trifling study, since the life of man is not sufficient to acquire a knowledge of the Chinese characters, which are about four-score thousand; so that these people cannot be supposed to have extensive views, nor to be capable of forming any great designs, common-

ly either employing themselves in paying court like slaves, or perhaps making their fortunes by knavery: Lastly, the people's being all engaged in cultivating the land, or some petty traffic, or in attending to rites and ceremonies, being attached to their ancient customs from taste, and to their ancient government from habit and principle, they place their whole happiness in obedience, unwilling to quit their station, provided that their customs and manners, which confirm the constitution of their country, be preserved to them. The Chinese are a very singular object for the attention of the rest of the world, both on account of the extraordinary duration of their empire, and the unchangeable attachment to their maxims. But both their example and that of the Egyptians, serve to prove, that a slavish submission to national customs helps to perpetuate all sorts of errors in a nation, and to deprive it of numberless advantages. *

The philosopher Confucius.

That we may not let slip an opportunity of making a great man known, who has been honoured in his own country for more than two thousand years, and whose posterity are the only hereditary nobility, we shall add a few words concerning Confucius, the most respectable philosopher that has existed in the world, since he has been the author of the greatest good. He was born of an illustrious family, about five hundred and fifty years before Jesus Christ. From the age of fifteen, he preferred learning, and the study of philosophy, to all

* Mably, Doutes sur l'ordre naturel, &c.

the pleasures of youth. His singular merit raised him to posts of honour, and, having become mandarin and minister of state, the vices of a voluptuous court were exposed to his view; but finding they could not be amended by his counsels, he withdrew from his employments, to teach morality to those who were worthy of his attention. It is said, that, in a short time, he had not less than three thousand disciples, and that many of them acquired the greatest reputation for wisdom. His philosophy consisted more in practice than speculation, and his followers were therefore rather wise men than great orators. Some of his maxims may serve to give an idea of him; and I have therefore extracted them from the Encyclopedie, article *China*, without being able to prove their authenticity.

Maxims of Confucius.

I. The philosopher is he who, having a profound knowledge of books and things, examines and yields to reason, walking with a steady pace in the ways of truth and justice.

II. There is a certain celestial reason or rectitude inherent in all men; and there is a worldly supplement to that gift when it is lost. The celestial reason is the portion of the saint, the supplement that of the sage.

III. The wise man is his own severest censurer: he is his own judge, his own witness and accuser.

IV. Charity is that rational and constant affection, which makes us sacrifice ourselves to the human race, as if we were united with it so as to form one individual, partaking equally in its adversity and prosperity.

If the Chinese had been known to the Greeks, they must have held a considerable rank in ancient history, where however we do not find them mentioned. I refer to the modern, for a particular account of that celebrated nation.

THE

ANCIENT HISTORY

OF THE

ASSYRIANS AND BABYLONIANS.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE ANTIQUITIES OF THESE NATIONS.

The Assyrians and Babylonians blended together.

THE darkness in which the history of Egypt is enveloped, is nothing in comparison with that of the first nations of Asia, in which scarce one ray of truth is to be discovered. If we were to give credit to numbers of historians, Nineveh and Babylon, though but at a little distance from one another, were two immense cities, and the capitals of two great empires; but if we look back to the source, examine the evidence, and compare the different criticisms without prejudice or prepossession, it will appear evident that the Assyrians and Babylonians were very soon blended together into one people, united into one empire, and that the same state was frequently mentioned by both names.

Ctesias the author of the fables concerning Assyria.

For spreading and perpetuating fables, nothing more has ever been requisite, than that they should be published by an author of re-

putation, and, which is always the case, be repeated after him by succeeding writers. Ctesias of Cnidus, physician to the younger Cyrus, is the author of all the falsehoods which have been so often transcribed concerning the Assyrian empire. Diodorus Siculus, who was cotemporary with Cæsar, has copied the tales of Ctesias, and many later historians have followed Diodorus; so that this corrupted source has infected almost all the channels through which that history has flowed. What credit can be given to the authority of Cyrus's physician? Aristotle did not think him worthy of attention; and all the world allow that his history of India, which he boldly narrates, as having been an eyewitness, is filled with the grossest falsehoods. Having therefore been convicted of endeavouring to impose in one case, he should be the less credited in others; and the rather, as even his history of Assyria has in it some striking marks of absurdity. Let us lay aside every prejudice for a moment to hearken to Ctesias and Diodorus, and let us not be afraid to judge for ourselves.

Story of Ninus as told by Ctesias and Diodorus.

Ninus being possessed with a rage of conquest, subdued an infinite number of nations all the way from Egypt to India; but suspended his warlike enterprises to found the city of Nineveh, which Diodorus places upon the banks of the Euphrates, and not the Tigris; an error perhaps of the transcriber, yet not unworthy our notice. Nineveh was quickly built with walls a hundred feet high, having fifteen hundred towers two hundred feet in height, to serve equally for its ornament and defence. The circumference of the whole city

was four hunded and eighty stadia (furlongs), estimated at twenty-five or thirty leagues. Even adopting the reduction of the length of the stadium proposed by M. de l'Isle, Nineveh will still be seven times larger than Paris.

Of Semiramis and Babylon.

This work being completed, Ninus resumed his arms at the head of a million of fighting men; and Semiramis, who was the wife of one of his officers, distinguished herself by her heroic exploits. The king married her, and left her his crown; and this ambitious princess being desirous, in her turn, to render her name immortal, in a very few years built the city of Babylon, which much exceeded Nineveh, its walls being of sufficient thickness to allow six chariots to go abreast. The quays, the bridge over the Euphrates, the hanging gardens, the prodigies of sculpture and architecture, the temple of Belus, which had in it a golden statue forty feet high, were all works of Semiramis. She likewise built other cities; set out to conquer kingdoms; marched against the king of the Indies, with an army of three million of infantry, five hundred thousand horse, a hundred thousand chariots, &c.; and, to supply the want of elephants, she contrived the following excellent stratagem. She ordered three hundred thousand black oxen to be killed, and their hides to be formed into the shape of elephants, which, being placed upon camels, were drawn up in battle array; but the stratagem did not succeed; for the heroine was defeated, wounded, and put to flight; and, some time after, died in her own country.

The history of Assyria after Nynias.

Her son Nynias was but the shadow of a king. From the time of that prince, to the voluptu-

ous reign of Sardanapalus, which is a space of more than eight hundred years, we do not find a single incident worth being mentioned. That prince is said to have destroyed himself by fire, with his women and treasures, when besieged by Arbaces, governor of the Medes; and thus ended the Assyrian monarchy, to which Ctesias and Diodorus give a duration of fourteen centuries; while Herodotus tells us that it lasted only five hundred and twenty years. Such a history is, like the fairy tales, unworthy of reflection.

Antiquity of Babylon according to Berosus.

According to the Holy Scripture, the empire of Babylon was founded by Nimrod, great-grandson of Noah; but Berosus, a Chaldean priest, who, with Manetho, wrote in the time of Alexander, gives a most prodigious and incredible duration to this empire, boasting that he had found memoirs which traced them back a hundred and fifty thousand years. But instead of giving us facts, he fills his annals with fictitious names of princes; and, to give some colour to the imposition, accuses Nabonassar, of having suppressed all the histories of the kingdom, that he might be thought the first sovereign of Babylon.

Era of Nabonassar.

The era of Nabonassar is fixed seven hundred and forty-seven years before Jesus Christ, at which time the Chaldean astronomical observations began, which have been handed down to us by Ptolemy. Those which, it is alleged, were sent to Aristotle by Calisthenes, which comprehended a space of one thousand nine hundred and seven years, are exceedingly doubtful, and are not mentioned by the ancient astronomers. Simplicius, a philosopher of the

sixth century, takes notice of them only upon the authority of Porphyrius. It is surprising to find Rollin admitting such observations, in whose chronology they would reach almost to the deluge.

The Assyrian empire of no great antiquity.

The authors of the English Universal History allege, that the true history of Assyria is only to be had in the Bible; and they begin with Pul, who founded that kingdom seven hundred and seventy-one years before Jesus Christ. His successors, particularly Salmanazar and Senacharib, were the scourges of Judea. The same authors conjecture, that Nabonassar is the Ninus of Ctesias, and Semiramis (if there was a queen of that name) was his wife; and that the great works of Babylon should be ascribed to Nebuchadnezzar, who was celebrated by the taking of Jerusalem, and by the wonders which are related of him in Scripture. But, can we think, that what has been handed down to us of the antiquity of this empire must be false, especially when the Holy Scripture places the foundation of Nineveh, as well as Babylon, a little after the deluge?

Whatever the learned have been able to imagine, either with a desire to disentangle truth from ancient fables, or to reconcile profane history with the Holy Scripture, can only serve to oppress the memory with a load of useless learning. The empires of the Assyrians and Babylonians almost disappear in profane history, after the time of Sardanapalus, which is exactly the period when Nineveh and Babylon appear with lustre in the Jewish history. This single difficulty has produced numberless vo-

lumes, systems, and conjectures, without the subject being either cleared up or exhausted. Let us dedicate our time to more useful researches. What Providence has thought fit to wrap up in impenetrable darkness, can be of no consequence to mankind.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE RELIGION, SCIENCES, AND MANNERS OF THE BABYLONIANS.

Astronomy very ancient among the Chaldeans.

THE country of Mesopotamia, which is situated between the rivers Tigris and Euphrates, in one of the finest climates in the world, contends with Egypt for the reputation of having given birth to the arts and sciences. The vast plains of Babylon, under a clear and delightful sky, surrounded with all the riches of nature, were particularly favourable for making astronomical observations. Accordingly, the Babylonians, or rather their priests the Chaldeans, from whom the country derived its name, have generally been supposed the earliest astronomers; notwithstanding the claims of the Egyptians, who arrogate to themselves the superiority in every thing, and which the Greeks allowed them upon too slender authority, from their having been bred in the Egyptian schools. Mesopotamia not being overflowed like Egypt, it is natural to imagine that it was first peopled, and there is some reason

for supposing, that scientific knowledge had its source in that, rather than in the other country.

Worship of the stars established in that country.

Unfortunately, the propensity of the human mind to superstition is so great, that their first steps in the road to science, have almost always led to this destructive error. The Chaldeans very soon began to worship the stars as gods; and undoubtedly the common people believed them to be such, while those who were better instructed, supposed them to be governed by some inferior divinities. They called the sun Belus,* and the moon Nabo, and they were their chief deities.

Judicial astrology.

The opinion, that the stars have a necessary influence upon the fate and conduct of men, naturally took its rise from this worship. One consequence of this was judicial astrology; which absurd science the priests supported with the more attention, as it secured their influence over the minds of the people, their astronomical observations being dedicated almost solely to that purpose. Thus, Kepler very sensibly represents judicial astrology as the foolish daughter of a wise mother, whose assistance was necessary for her support. A dangerous curiosity, and a stupid credulity, established astrology. The people, anxious to look into futurity, either with a design to deliver themselves from impending evils, or to obtain some wished-for good, flocked to the priests whose magical operations promised so many miracles.

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* *Belus*, or *Baal*, signifies Lord.

Astronomy must be defective, when cultivated only for such a purpose. According to Diodorus, the Chaldeans were not sufficiently expert to be able to foretel the eclipses of the sun; but they knew the motion of the planets from west to east. They divided each sign of the zodiac into thirty degrees, and every degree into thirty minutes. They made the year consist of three hundred and sixty-five days, to which they added the surplus five hours and some minutes; and looked upon comets as planets very eccentric from the earth. It is said they even calculated, that, if a man was to follow the sun, walking at a good pace, round the globe, he would arrive at the same time with him at the equinoctial point. It is true, that if a man was to walk a league an hour, he would go eight thousand seven hundred and sixty leagues in three hundred and sixty-five days; but the circumference of the globe is about nine thousand leagues. * The invention of sun-dials is likewise ascribed to them, which are said to have been discovered in the time of Achaz, five years before Nabonassar. If authors have represented the Chaldean doctrines differently, it is owing to their schools disagreeing among themselves, and the opinion of an individual sometimes being mistaken, for their general doctrine. Their observatory was a high tower in the middle of the temple of Belus. †

Progress of the Chaldeans in astronomy.

Not content with observing the stars and

Cosmogony of the Chaldeans.

* Achilles Tatius, who relates this fact, is of too modern a date to be esteemed sufficient authority.

† See the Origin of Laws, &c., by Goguet, Part III.

the works of nature, they endeavoured to examine the origin of all things, which could only be made known by a certain revelation. Their cosmogony was a series of various extravagancies. They supposed, that after Belus had formed the world and the animals, he caused his head to be cut off; and that the other gods having tempered some clay with the blood which flowed from the wound, formed men, who were endowed with understanding, and a portion of the deity. All the Chaldean fables, according to Berosus, were only a mysterious allegory, to explain the manner in which the chaos was unravelled and arranged; and the result was, that the Supreme God employed another god to form the world, which is a doctrine almost universally received in the East.

Required a blind submission from their disciples.

But the Chaldeans deserve chiefly to be censured for the blind submission they required from their disciples, whom they obliged to follow their opinions. In this, Diodorus ranks them above the Greeks, whom the liberty of thinking rendered wavering and indecisive. But whether is it better to crouch under the tyranny of prejudice, or to employ our reason in search of truth, though at the risk of deceiving ourselves as our predecessors have done? If it had not been for a prudent boldness, the human mind must have continued to this day the sport of all the chimeras of the Ancients. Chancellor Bacon does not disapprove of the maxim which says, *That the disciples should believe;* but he desires to add, *that after being taught, they should employ their reason.* *

* *Oportet discentem credere.——Oportet jam edoctum judicio suo uti.* De Augment. Scient.

Let us observe, that Berosus speaks of a great deluge which happened in the reign of the tenth king of Chaldea, wherein he mentions some circumstances strongly resembling those in the Scripture. That king, by order of Saturn, built a vessel, into which he shut himself up with all his family, the animals, and necessary provisions. After the deluge, he let fly birds, that returned till they found the earth dry and habitable. These are particular touches of a tradition, which has been spread over an immense extent. The deluge mentioned by Berosus.

The arts flourished from time immemorial in Assyria and Babylon, and luxury, effeminacy, and debauchery equally prevailed there; either from the culture of the arts and sciences immediately following a corruption of manners, or that they contribute indirectly to that corruption, from the abuse made of them by vicious men. If we may credit Herodotus and Strabo, this culture was disgraced by an infamous custom; for they tell us, that every woman was obliged, by the law, to prostitute herself once to a stranger, in the temple of Mylitta, or Venus; but M. Goguet represents this infamous practice, with which the Babylonians have been so much reproached, and which M. de Voltaire rejects as absurd and impossible, as a proof of their blind submission to errors, rather than of their licentiousness. He follows the Ancients in imagining, that this custom was established by a superstitious prejudice, with a view of preserving the virtue of their women; for there is no degree of extravagance which superstition does not produce and render sacred. They believed that Venus was a malignant deity, and an enemy to the honour of the sex, and there- Arts, luxury and debauchery united.

fore desired to pacify her by this sacrifice. The stranger to whom the woman gave herself up from this religious motive, was obliged to deliver to her a piece of money, with these words, *I implore the Goddess Mylitta in your favour.* Herodotus* assures us, that after they had fulfilled the intentions of the law, the Babylonian women were models of conjugal fidelity. Justin says the same thing of the women of Cyprus, and Ælian of the women of Lydia, where the same law prevailed, and that the men were solicitous to marry them. The manners of the Babylonians were not greatly corrupted till after the conquest of Cyrus; and poverty was the principal cause of their debauchery.

Manners of the Babylonians.

The Babylonian women, contrary to the customs of the rest of the Asiatics, lived familiarly among the men, and eat in company with strangers, which was probably the reason that their manners were more gentle. The dreadful picture which is drawn of them in Scripture, seems to disagree with the evidence of the profane writers; but the severe treatment the Jews met with in Babylon, occasioned the keenness of their complaints. According to Berosus, the Babylonians celebrated an annual festival which lasted five days, during which time the slaves took the place of their masters, with the privilege of commanding and being served by them.

Singular custom for marrying the girls.

To promote population, which is an object of the greatest political importance, the most beautiful of their young women were sold to the highest bidder; and a sum of money was then given, to whoever would take those that

* Herodotus, lib. 36.

were ill-favoured, so that they fell to the share of the person that was willing to accept of them upon the lowest terms. Undoubtedly, this is only to be understood of the common people; but, however, it was a means for all the girls being provided. It is not an easy matter to prognosticate favourably of marriages which are made at random, or when the parties are unknown to one other; but what shall we say of ours, when money alone serves to determine us, and merit without fortune goes for nothing? Among the Babylonians, if their hearts could not be united, they were parted upon the money being restored. They did not imagine, that they could form indissoluble ties rashly. A tribunal was established for marrying their girls, and punishing adultery; which proves that they held sacred the conjugal union, and that their manners could not be corrupted but by a breach of the laws.

Syria.

The history of Persia will bring us back to Babylon. It is not necessary to mention the Syrians; for if it were not for some passages in Scripture, we should not have known that any ancient kings of Syria ever existed, or that there were kings of Damascus, which was the capital of that country. Profane history confounds it with Assyria, till the dismembering of Alexander's empire; and we are only acquainted with some superstitions which prevailed there, from a work written by Lucian, who says, that the priests of the goddess of Syria voluntarily made themselves eunuchs; and were universally known by the name of *Galli*. The learned suppose this goddess to be the celestial Venus of Babylon; a conjecture of no consequence.

HISTORY OF THE PHENICIANS.

Idea of commercial nations.

WHEN we prefer the arts of peace to the bloody enterprises of heroes, one of the noblest spectacles which history can present to our view is, the industry of a people surmounting the obstacles which have been opposed to them by nature, and supplying themselves, by means of their genius and resolution, with whatever has been withheld from them by an unkind climate; conquering the most terrible of all the elements, and paving a way to themselves over the raging billows, to render distant nations in some degree tributary; not only refraining from violence, but supplying them with conveniences till then unknown. Such were the Phenicians, called in the Scripture Canaanites, that is to say merchants, a people who were celebrated for their antiquity, their commerce and maritime enterprises, whom nevertheless the generality of historians have contented themselves with having barely named.

Necessity of commerce.

Society could not subsist without commerce, the necessities of one being thereby supplied from the superfluities of another. With those things which are in too great quantity, we purchase what we want; and if we possess nothing, we sell our labour, and live upon what

it can produce. In the early ages of the world, when the desires, like the necessities of men, were confined within very narrow bounds, their commerce was limited to a simple barter of commodities. The shepherd gave the labourer some of his cattle, who, in return, gave the shepherd part of his harvest; and in like manner other exchanges were made. As commerce advanced, commodities of small bulk, and more particularly metals, as being the most durable, and easily transported, were employed to represent merchandise, and to serve as a common price. They became the symbols of the real property which the earth produced, or industry could furnish; and we find them employed for that purpose from the time of Abraham. But a more wonderful art, the art of navigation, was to extend and give new life to commerce.

Its progress.

The Phenicians were navigators from time immemorial. Living in a barren country upon the coast of the Mediterranean, they found the necessity of seeking resources elsewhere. They perceived that the sea, which separates countries, might likewise serve to unite them; and, after different attempts, exposed their lives, in a piece of brittle wood, to the mercy of winds and waves, in order to procure, in other climates, what nature had denied their own. The forests of Mount Lebanon, and the convenience of their harbours, were valuable advantages which they knew how to improve. It is believed that their commerce was become extensive a few ages after the deluge; which is the more astonishing, as a knowledge of navigation implies a progress being made in astro-

Navigation long known to the Phenicians.

nomy, and a number of difficult arts. They could have no other guide but the stars, and at first attended chiefly to the Great Bear, and afterwards to a star in the Little Bear, which is much nearer the pole. Who could have imagined that, in a future period, ships would be guided upon the immense ocean by means of a small needle? It was a prodigy, at that time, to see people transported to different climates and new skies.

Great extent of their commerce.

While the Egyptians beheld the sea with a superstitious horror, the Phenicians had the courage to pass over it, and thence reaped the greatest advantages. They planted numerous colonies in the isles of Cyprus and Rhodes, Greece, Sicily, and Sardinia; they visited the south coasts of Spain, passed the Strait, and penetrated into the ocean. Cadiz became their magazine; Betica, and the rest of Spain, supplied them with immense wealth: They exported from thence honey, wax, pitch, iron, lead, copper, tin, &c. Their vessels were so overloaded with silver, that they were even obliged to hang weights of it to their anchors, instead of lead. According to Strabo, they had some settlements on the western coasts of Africa, soon after the Trojan war. The Scripture makes mention of frequent voyages being made by Solomon's fleets, under the conduct of the Phenicians, to the land of Ophir and Tarshish, (which is thought to be the kingdom of Sofala in Ethiopia), from whence they returned at the end of three years, loaded with gold, silver, ivory, precious stones, and other kinds of merchandise. Being factors for all the known world, they carefully concealed the

secret of their navigation, because they were afraid of being rivalled; a jealousy natural to merchants, but contrary to the common good of mankind.

Their voyage round Africa in the time of Nechos.

Nothing is more remarkable, than the enterprise which they executed to satisfy the curiosity of Nechos King of Egypt, about six hundred and ten years before Jesus Christ. That prince made them sail from the Red Sea, with orders to steer their course along the western coast of Africa, and enter the Mediterranean by Hercules's Pillars, or the Straits of Cadiz. In three years they actually arrived at the mouth of the Nile.

Form of their vessels.

The form of their trading vessels was almost round, because the necessity of keeping near the shore obliged them to make up in breadth for their want of depth; but for their warlike expeditions, they had vessels of a different construction, which were both long and sharp. I do not know which deserves the greatest admiration, the immense superiority of our marine, over that of this ancient nation, or the greatness of their maritime undertakings, which were executed with such slender means, and in defiance of such obstructions.

Phenician dye.

The value of the Phenician stuffs, and their skill in dying, is well known. Their purple, we may say, was a gift of fortune; for the discovery was owing to a shepherd's dog, who, being compelled by hunger, devoured a shell-fish, the blood issuing from which dyed his muzzle of such a colour, that the people, being struck with its beauty, applied it to their manufactures; and it has, since that time, been reserved for the garb of princes. A similar

origin has produced many important discoveries; and, as nature is inexhaustible, observation will unquestionably produce many more.

Their sciences.

What has been already said upon the science of the Egyptians, may in part be applied to the Phenicians. A people who understood commerce and navigation, could not fail to be acquainted with geometry, mechanics, arithmetic, geography, &c. They acquired them by degrees; and certainly a very inaccurate practice supplied the want of theory. To them the invention of the alphabet has been commonly ascribed; and, by dint of genius, they seem to have outstripped the Egyptians, who, being wedded to old customs and hereditary prejudices, stopped at the very point where every thing seemed to invite them to perfection, and to the making of fresh discoveries; while the others were incessantly making some new attempts to accomplish their purpose, and every step they took was marked with a degree of success.

Effects of a passion for wealth.

Perhaps the thirst of gain contributed as much to their success as their natural disposition. Such a passion is hurtful to morals; it introduces dishonesty, with which the Phenicians have been much reproached; and the riches which it heaps up frequently produce a depravity of manners. But indolence and poverty are attended with as bad consequences. If we see vices among an industrious people, who are enriched by commerce, humanity is comforted by a view of the wonderful effects of application, the resources and conveniences which it procures, and the happiness which it diffuses over even those conditions which are apparently the most wretched and unhappy.

Sidon, which was the capital of Phenicia, held the empire of the sea for a considerable time, to which the famous city of Tyre succeeded. We shall have occasion to mention Carthage in another place, which was founded by a colony of Tyrians, about eight hundred and ninety years before Jesus Christ, and owed its existence to the cruelty and avarice of a monarch. Pygmalion, king of Tyre, having put to death the husband of his sister Elissa or Dido, that he might seize upon his immense riches, this courageous princess fled away with all her husband's treasure, and, on the coast of Africa, laid the foundation of that famous city, which we shall see made even Rome tremble. The Carthaginians, like the Phenicians, succeeded by carrying on an advantageous commerce; but their ruin may serve as a lesson to commercial states, who, by giving themselves up to a desire of making conquests, certainly expose themselves to destruction.

Sidon and Tyre.

Foundation of Carthage.

Phenicia was not entirely freed from superstitions by their activity in business; but they seem to have been less addicted to them than the Egyptians. The worship of Venus at Biblos was intermixed with debauchery; and human sacrifices made a part of their religious ceremonies. They adopted some absurd traditions about Adonis, who was likewise named Osiris or Thammuz. At the time the river Adonis appeared to be tinged with blood, which is a very natural phenomenon, where the current sometimes sweeps along with it a reddish-coloured earth, the women bitterly lamented the death of the Adonis of Venus, manifesting their sorrow by mournful sacrifices, and even

Phenician superstitions.

The worship of Adonis.

by scourgings. The next day, supposing him to be come again to life, and ascended to the heavens, they shaved their heads in the same manner as the Egyptians did upon the death of their god Apis; but they who wished to preserve their hair, were obliged to prostitute themselves, and the profits of the crime were applied to the use of the temple.

In proportion as the true religion exalts a man above himself, so much does superstition, on the contrary, debase him below the brute; a maxim inculcated by a thousand examples, and from whence two advantages should naturally follow; the one, to attach us to that perfect worship taught us by Christianity; the other, to guard us from those illusions and follies which are an insult to the Deity, and debase human nature.

Works of Sanchoniathon.

Sanchoniathon of Berytus in Phenicia, the most ancient writer next to Moses, some of whose works are still extant, wrote the antiquities of his own country, according to the best critics, about the time of Joshua, and traces them back to the beginning of the world. Some striking rays of light may be seen in his fabulous cosmogony, as in all the others which are the produce of human fancy. He mentions a dark chaos, and a Spirit (πνευμα) which set the universe in order; but no more of his ideas have any resemblance to what is contained in the Bible. He neither speaks of the fall of man, nor of the deluge, nor of the dispersing of the people over the face of the earth; it has therefore been said, upon too slight grounds, that he was acquainted with the Holy Scriptures. Eusebius, who has preserved a valuable frag-

His cosmogony.

ment of that author, translated by Philo of Biblos, accuses him of tending to atheism; and the same thing has been repeated by a hundred writers, who have always asserted that his intention was to authorize idolatry. These two accusations seem contradictory; and it is more than probable, that the author has only related what were the theological opinions of his country, and what he himself believed. He mentions a first man and first woman, very different from Adam and Eve, and ascribes the invention of arts to their descendants; to one the making of fire; to another the building of huts; and to others hunting, fishing, making utensils of iron, &c. He rests the authority of his history upon the writings of Thaaut, who was called Hermes by the Greeks, and Mercury by the Latins. His work is at present looked upon to be authentic; and his account of the first ages of the world, though clouded with fables and obscure allegories, may be read with advantage. *

* See the 'Origine des Lois,' &c. Dissertation X.

HISTORY

OF THE

HEBREWS, OR JEWS.

Beginning of the Jewish nation.

THE Hebrews did not become a people, or acquire a fixed establishment, till a considerable time after those nations of whom we have been now speaking. They were only wandering shepherds or slaves, till the time of their leaving Egypt; yet their books make the basis of the Christian faith. Here we ought humbly to reverence the admirable works of the Creator, and the incomprehensible mysteries of his providence, which is the first object for the study of a Christian; but, as I said before, neither the Pentateuch, nor the other parts of the Bible, can be indifferently mixed with profane history, without confounding all our ideas. Can a theocratical government, directed by the immediate orders of the Supreme Being; a chain of miracles subverting the order of nature; a train of uncommon actions explained by supernatural principles; be proper subjects for critical discussion, or give just ideas of human policy and social life? The Jews, confined to a small spot, and from principle unwilling to mix with other people, continued long in ob-

scurity; they were almost perpetually enslaved by every one who thought fit to attack them, and became objects of contempt and hatred to all their neighbours; a rude, barbarous, superstitious people, even unfaithful to the true God, who loaded them with benefits; a people who received knowledge and laws direct from heaven, yet scarcely deserve to be reckoned in the number of civilized nations.

When we view them in the light most interesting to the human mind, our inquiries must be limited to some peculiarities in their laws and customs. This is not the place to speak of those divine precepts which every one is taught in infancy.

The laws of religion blended with the civil law.

Their religious laws were blended with their civil law, or, to speak more properly, the whole was a religious duty, because it was ordained from God, or rather by God himself. But as that salutary restraint, the fear of the Lord, does not always check the passions; and as the Jews guided themselves only by the senses, they had scarcely any idea of a future state; therefore there were dreadful threatenings and severe punishments denounced against offenders. He who broke the Sabbath was stoned; and it was a breach of the Sabbath to perform any sort of work, to make any kind of purchase, or even to light a fire. Children who obstinately disobeyed their parents, were punished with death. A blasphemer, an idolater, or an adulterer, might be instantly stoned without any form of trial. Such executions were called *the decree of zeal;* but might they not sometimes become the decrees of hatred and fanaticism?

Severity of the Jewish laws.

Insolvent debtors were made slaves. Crimes which were looked upon as trivial by other nations, were frequently punished with death by the Jews.

Legal ceremonies in great number.

An endless number of expiations, legal ceremonies, and precepts, of which we do not know the origin, served to keep this fickle people in subjection. There were a number of animals which they were forbidden to eat, such as the hog, the hare, and the rabbit; crawling insects, and fish without fins or scales. These animals were reputed to be unclean, and the person was thought to be defiled who touched them even when dead. The ashes of a red heifer were absolutely necessary in the greatest part of their expiations; and the *waters of jealousy*, which were employed when a man suspected his wife of infidelity, seem very much to resemble our ancient ordeals or judicial trials. Bitter herbs mixed with holy water, and a form of imprecation accompanied with some religious ceremonies, made the bellies of the guilty swell and burst. * The law of grace has abolished all these customs, as well as circumcision, which was positively commanded to the Jews. They, like many other nations, offered human sacrifices.

Sabbatical year, and Jubilee.

Every seventh year was Sabbatical, and then all the labours of agriculture were suspended. They gave their harvest to the poor, to strangers, and to orphans, and freedom to their slaves, discharging all debts which were owing to them by Israelites. They likewise did the same at their jubilee, which was celebrated every fiftieth year. At that period, every one resumed his

* Numbers, v. 24, &c.

property in whatever manner it had been alienated. The desire of perpetuating families occasioned this law, which could not be reconciled with the common course of transactions in a great and wealthy nation. They had six cities of refuge; but they only served as sanctuaries, to protect those who fled to them from the severity of justice, in case of involuntary homicide; but assassins might be torn even from the altar, to suffer death. It is an inconceivable abuse to let asylums become a protection to criminals.

Portion of the Priests.

Though the tribe of Levi, according to Jacob's prophecy, was to be dispersed among the others, and the priests and Levites, according to a law in Deuteronomy, could have only the tithes, the offerings, and the ransom of the first-born for their portion, yet the priests seem to have been very well provided. They had the possession of forty cities; they collected several kinds of tithes; the first-fruits and offerings were considerable. Things vowed to God, except cattle, lands, and the fruits of the earth, might be redeemed for money; and these vows added greatly to the wealth of the priesthood. The chief priests exercised very great powers even in civil matters; and Moses ordained that, in all difficulties, the people should have recourse to the priests and judge, and, upon pain of death, to abide by their decision.* From these different regulations, which are proper for a theocracy, many false consequences, contrary to sound government, have been deduced; as if the new law was the law of Moses,

* Deuteronomy, xviii. 8, &c.

and to be a Christian, it was necessary to have been a Jew.

All strangers, their language, history, arts and sciences, were looked upon with horror or contempt by the Jews. They were entirely ignorant of navigation and astronomy, even after their return from Babylon. They looked upon eclipses with an eye of superstition, without having a word in their language by which they could express that phenomenon: however, they unquestionably brought from Egypt some of the natural knowledge and customs of that country. They always concealed their sacred books from the rest of mankind, and when Ptolemy Philadelphus procured a translation of them, they instituted fasts to commemorate the supposed misfortune. There seems to have been an insurmountable barrier between the Jews and the inhabitants of every part of the world where either reason or politeness have been cultivated.

The Jews ignorant of the sciences.

There is room to believe, in opposition to the opinion commonly received, that poetry among other nations did not spring from religion, since the songs of the savages only celebrate the praises and heroic deeds of their countrymen; and even small nations are quoted, who, though they have no ideas of religion, yet have poets. In all probability, poetry sprung from lively passions, or from a desire to imprint facts upon the memory: but the Jews, from the first, dedicated it to the most sacred purpose, and their Psalms and Spiritual Songs exalt the soul to the throne of God. Most of the learned differ from Le Clerc, who thought these poems were in rhyme,

Origin of poetry.

Neither are there sufficient proofs that the Hebrew was the mother-tongue of the whole world; and, as M. Falconet observes, it is from a mistaken zeal for religion that this opinion has been established. The ancient commerce of the Phenicians, the dispersion of the Jews, the conquests of the Arabs, and, lastly, the Crusades, have probably introduced the Oriental words which are found in the Occidental languages. *

Whether the Hebrew is the original language.

The Moabites, Ammonites, Midianites, Edomites, Amalekites, Canaanites, and Philistines, who were at war with the Jews, are not worth mentioning: almost all of them, though idolaters, submitted to circumcision.

* Memoires de l'Acad. des Inscript. tom. xx.

HISTORY

OF THE

MEDES AND PERSIANS.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE MEDES BEFORE CYRUS.

Before Cyrus, their ancient history fabulous.

As these two nations formed but one famous empire under Cyrus, before whose time every thing relating to their history is obscure and uncertain, they ought to be included in the same article. It is necessary to repeat incessantly, how little the Greeks are to be credited upon the subject of antiquities. Their own reveries, frequently added to groundless traditions, were, by their writings, erected into historical monuments. If that able geographer Ptolemy computed that the Caspian sea, from east to west, was twenty-three degrees and a half, though in its greatest extent it is less than four, how much more reason have we to believe that history must overflow with errors, at a time when it was written without either criticism or inquiry, but merely to please the taste of those who furnished its authors with fables?

The Medes shake off the Assyrian yoke.

We have no occasion to examine what Ctesias and his follower Diodorus have said about the ancient Medes; a single observation will

be sufficient. It is of no consequence whether Arbaces governor of Media, which was under the Assyrian yoke, took advantage of the effeminacy of Sardanapalus to excite a revolt against him, or some other cause produced the same effect; but the Medes did shake off the yoke, and lived for some time in a state of anarchy almost as dreadful as slavery, till they found that unbridled liberty was an inexhaustible source of mischief. To remedy this evil, they appointed Dejoces judge, who, by making laws, and administering justice, put an end to their disturbances, and restored good order. Perhaps it was with a view of being sought after, and to be raised to a more elevated station, that he suddenly retired, after a prudent discharge of his duty as a judge; but he was no sooner gone, than licentiousness renewed all their former miseries, which Dejoces alone was thought capable of dispelling; and therefore they chose him king, about six hundred years before Jesus Christ.

His despotism.

Being elated with his new dignity, or believing that despotism was necessary to restrain his subjects, he affected an excessive severity; shut himself up within the walls of an inaccessible palace, and, according to Herodotus, gave orders that nobody should be admitted to the privilege of seeing him but the officers of his household, and all others be obliged to apply to his ministers; likewise, that whoever dared to laugh or spit in his presence, should be punished. Montesquieu observes, that this was a way to make royalty respected, but not the king. But is it not a way to make both the king and royalty hated?

Fables concerning Ecbatana, and Mount Bagistan.

It is said, that the city of Ecbatana, the capital of the kingdom, built by Dejoces, was encompassed with seven walls, one rising above another the height of the battlements, and these battlements were of different colours, white, black, purple, blue, orange, and the two last silvered and gilded. This description of Herodotus seems to be of the same nature with that of mount Bagistan in Media, which, Diodorus says, was cut into a groupe by order of Semiramis, representing her placed in the midst of a hundred of her guards.

Diodorus gives us a list of the kings of Media, of whom Herodotus makes no mention, so that we may say they have written quite different histories; but it is of little consequence to us to be acquainted with the history of these princes till the time of Cyrus.

Immutability of their laws.

The manners, laws, and religion of the Medes were nearly the same with those of the Persians, of whom I am about to give an account. One thing which distinguishes the Medes is, that the royal authority could neither change nor repeal a law once passed; and that the education of their princes was trusted solely to women and eunuchs. Thus, an error once made into a law could not be revoked; and the education of their princes, if we may use the expression, would naturally make them women! Polygamy was not only allowed, but commanded in Media. Strabo says, that, in the mountainous parts, they were obliged to keep at least seven wives; and that a woman was despised, if she had not at least five husbands.* But how

* Strabo, l. xi.

is it possible to believe this, unless we can suppose that both men and women were common; and in that case, what appearance of marriage could remain? Formerly, every thing said by the Ancients was believed; but, at present, doubts spring up incessantly.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE PERSIAN EMPIRE. CYRUS AND HIS IMMEDIATE SUCCESSORS.

Antiquity of the Persians.

THE Persians are certainly one of the most ancient nations, and, in the opinion of the learned, formed a considerable power, even in the time of Abraham; but it was not till the reign of Cyrus, which was a very remarkable period, about five hundred and sixty years before the Christian era, that they became famous and truly formidable. It should seem, that no period ought to be better known; yet the birth, the expeditions, and death of that conqueror, are historical problems impossible to be solved.

Herodotus, Ctesias, and Xenophon, who wrote about a century after Cyrus, give accounts as opposite as if they had written at the distance of several ages. Who then is to be believed? Xenophon's Cyropedia is plainly the work of a philosopher, rather than a historian, a kind of moral and political romance, composed for the instruction of princes and statesmen. Some

Xenophon's Cyropedia an uncertain history.

people, supposing the facts to be true, because he had an opportunity of being informed on the spot; and especially because they are more agreeable to Scripture, made it the source from whence they have taken their histories; but these reasons, so far from being certain, are but probabilities very slightly founded. Is it not very singular, that people can expect to discover truth with certainty, in a work which is interwoven with fables? After the learned Freret, I must add, that Xenophon's conformity with the Scripture is imaginary, for he rather contradicts the Scripture; and even his Cyropedia is invalidated, by his history of the expedition of Cyrus the younger, where he says, that Cyrus got possession of the empire of Media, by gaining a victory over his grandfather Astyages, which is agreeable to the histories of Herodotus and Ctesias. *

While we warmly recommend the Cyropedia, of which Rollin and the English authors of the Universal History have given an abstract, we cannot join with them, in allowing it to be a source of historical information worthy of credit. A few just observations are infinitely preferable to uncertain narrations.

Principal events concerning Cyrus.

Cyrus, who is supposed to be the son of Cambyses king of Persia, and of Mandane, daughter of Astyages king of Media, was undoubtedly the founder of a vast empire, which he established by his conquests. At the famous battle of Thymbria, he defeated the Babylonians, overthrew their empire, and, after a long siege, took the city of Babylon, by chang-

* Mem. de l'Acad. des Inscript. tom. vii.

ing the course of the river Euphrates, through whose channel he made his way into the heart of the city, while the inhabitants were immersed in the drunkenness of a festival. Five hundred and thirty-six years before Jesus Christ, he published the famous decree, which permitted the Jews to return to Jerusalem, after threescore and ten years captivity; and then pursuing his conquests, he extended his dominions to the river Indus on the east; to the Caspian and Black Sea, on the north; to the Ægean, on the west; to Ethiopia and the Arabian Gulf, on the south; making it the greatest empire which till that time had ever existed.

Contradictory accounts of the death of Cyrus.

According to Xenophon, that hero died in his bed, after a glorious reign of thirty years; but Herodotus says, that he was defeated and killed fighting against Tomyris, Queen of the Massagetes, who, with her own hands, threw his head into a vessel full of blood, saying, *Thou hast always thirsted after blood, now take thy fill.* By Diodorus Siculus's account, he was crucified by this princess. Ctesias makes him die of a wound which he received in Hyrcania; and different writers kill him in different ways. Such is the authority of histories which depend solely upon tradition.

Cyrus quite different in Xenophon and in Herodotus.

Xenophon makes his Cyrus a model for princes and mankind. He fights solely in defence of his uncle Cyaxares, son of Astyages, whose only daughter he married, and gains the love of all mankind by his moderation. His prisoner, the beautiful young Princess Panthea, found in him a protector of her virtue; and her husband, King Abradates, impelled by gra-

titude, comes over to the army of Cyrus. The Cyrus of Herodotus is very different. He takes up arms, and seizes the crown of his grandfather Astyages. Having conquered Crœsus, King of Lydia, he most barbarously ordered him to be burnt alive. When Crœsus was placed upon the pile, he exclaimed, *O Solon! Solon!* and being asked the reason of his invoking Solon, he answered, That a philosopher of that name, upon seeing his immense riches, had formerly told him, *That no man could call himself happy while he lived, as he could not foresee what might happen to him before his death;* a truth, adds he, which I now know by woful experience. Cyrus being struck with these words, and reflecting on the inconstancy of fortune, revoked his inhuman sentence, at the idea of which his heart should have recoiled. Herodotus's Cyrus, like almost all conquerors, is a scourge to the human race, while the Cyrus of Xenophon is a blessing to the nations he conquered.

Crœsus.

What may be conjectured of Cyrus's character.

Perhaps, the real Cyrus was only skilful and ambitious, a great man, and good enough prince to entitle him to the encomiums which were bestowed upon him, notwithstanding the acts of injustice which were the fruit of his ambition. The discipline which he introduced into his army; the arms which he gave them for close fighting, instead of bows and arrows, to which they had been accustomed before his time, undoubtedly contributed greatly to his success.

If the history of his immediate successors be examined with accuracy, we shall find it too blended with a number of fables, which

makes it very much to be doubted. I shall only point out some of the most remarkable events.

It is but seldom, that the glory of the parent descends to the children; but when they tarnish it by their own misconduct, it loads them with infamy. Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, showed himself a monster upon that throne which his father had filled with the greatest lustre, and in his whole conduct appeared to be a furious madman. His hatred against Amasis King of Egypt, inspired him with the desire of laying waste and subduing that kingdom; but upon his arrival on the frontiers, he was informed of the death of that monarch, who was succeeded by Psammenitus; however, he continued his march, gained a great victory over the Egyptians, and, by his cruelties, rendered his name odious. Herodotus says, that he saw the skulls with which the field of battle was strewed, in his time. Those of the Egyptians were hard as stone, because the heads of the children of that country were shaved, and the bones were hardened by the the sun; those of the Persians were soft and brittle, because they were accustomed to wear turbans from their infancy. But nothing can supply the want of valour, in which the Egyptians were deficient.

Conquest of Egypt about the year 525.

Cambyses.

If we may depend upon the history of those times, the ruin of the Egyptians was hastened by superstition. It is said, that Cambyses, being desirous to take the city of Pelusium by assault, placed a multitude of cats, dogs, and other animals that were deemed sacred in Egypt, in the first rank of his army, so that the

Superstition hastened the ruin of the Egyptians.

Egyptians, from a fear of wounding their gods, did not attempt to discharge their weapons against the enemy; and by this means the place was taken without opposition. A superstitious idea is sufficient to extinguish sentiments the most affecting to human nature, love of country, and the desire of self-preservation. From that time, the Egyptians were always slaves to strangers whom they despised.

Expedition against Ethiopia.

Cambyses being resolved likewise to subdue Ethiopia, a savage country, where bodily strength was the greatest merit, sent spies under the title of ambassadors; but the King of Ethiopia, who saw his intention, dismissed the ambassadors with orders to carry his bow to their master, with this advice, that he should make war against the Ethiopians, when the Persians had sufficient strength to bend that bow with the same ease that he could; and *thank the Gods*, added he, *for not having inspired us with a desire to extend our territories.* Cambyses was so enraged, that he immediately marched, without either having formed a plan for his conduct, or furnished himself with provisions, which soon obliged him to return with disgrace.

Incestuous marriage of Cambyses approved by the judges.

He ordered his brother Smerdis, who was the only man able to bend the King of Ethiopia's bow, to be assassinated. He espoused his own sister, after having, for form sake, referred the question of this incestuous marriage to the judges of his kingdom, whose servile meanness could not but comply with his desires. Their answer was, *That indeed they had no law which permitted a brother to marry his sister, but they*

had one which permitted the kings of Persia to do whatever they thought proper.

Cruelty of Cambyses.

The following instance will give a still stronger picture of despotism and slavish meanness. Cambyses asked his favourite one day, what was said of him in private conversation. 'Your great qualities are much admired,' replied Prexaspes (the name of the favourite); 'but they allege you love wine too much.' *They undoubtedly suppose*, said the King, *that wine impairs my faculties; you shall judge immediately.* He presently began drinking to excess; and then ordering the son of Prexaspes to stand at the end of the apartment, with his left hand upon his head, he took a bow, and having bent it, said he would shoot the young man through the heart; which he accordingly did, adding exultingly to the father, *Have I a steady hand?* To which the contemptible flatterer, as if unaffected with the murder of his son, replied, *Apollo could not have aimed better.*

Death of Cambyses.

Cambyses was informed, on his return to Persia, that some conspirators had chosen him a successor, which made him threaten immediate vengeance; but an accidental wound from his own sword, delivered the world from his cruel tyranny. The new king was one of the Magi, a priest unworthy of reigning. He declared, that he was prince Smerdis, the brother of Cambyses, who had been put to death. The imposture was discovered, and a conspiracy being formed by some of the nobility, they murdered the counterfeit Smerdis, and Darius, son of Hystaspes, one of the conspirators, became master of the empire. Can we believe, with Herodotus, that the affair was decided by the neighing of his horse?

from the peaceable state of the people, the best, as well as most ancient form of government is monarchy, moderated by prudent laws, and the execution supported by the prince who makes those laws the rule of his own conduct. The Platos, Aristotles, and Plutarchs, are obliged to acknowledge it, notwithstanding their republican prejudices. But, when a man sets himself up as a deity, treading his fellow-creatures under his feet, without any law but his own caprice, or the least respect for the natural rights of humanity, it is the very extreme of violence and usurpation; it owes its existence either to the sword always prepared for murder, or to slavish cowardice ready to receive the galling chain.

Whether such a government can subsist without being limited.

Is it possible, that a form of government can subsist, where the people are at the mercy of the prince, so that they have neither security for their property, nor for their personal safety? Undoubtedly despotism every where finds some boundary, either in fundamental laws, customs, manners, general interests, or in its own particular interest. Love of liberty, and a hatred of the Persians, certainly made the Greeks paint Asiatic despotism in colours much too strong: however, amidst these exaggerations there is too much truth; and the present state of Asia, in many respects, confirms the testimony of the Ancients.

Ideas of Persian despotism.

The Persian despot, for we can scarce give him any other name, assumed the titles of *The Great King*, or *The King of Kings*. The people were obliged to prostrate themselves before him as a divinity; and we have seen to what degree of meanness his courtiers were reduced,

when the least inattention exposed them to capital punishment. Xenophon mentions two people whom the younger Cyrus put to death, for not having covered their hands with their sleeves in his presence.

Let us compare these frightful idols, with an affable beneficent prince in the midst of his subjects, like the father of a family, inspiring love and respect by his looks, deriving the strength of his government from his sacred regard to the laws, punishing only criminals, and receiving the homage of the heart rather than of compulsion, and we shall easily judge which of the two is the image of the Supreme Being, who, having created all men equal, would not have established some superior to the rest, but for the good of the whole. Superiority of a good king over a despot.

That education, however, which Plato says was given to the princes who were intended to succeed to the crown of Persia, was well calculated to make them great men and excellent kings. At seven years of age they were taught the bodily exercises; after which, the chief eunuchs or officers of the palace instructed them in the first lessons of morality. At fourteen they were put under the care of four men, eminently distinguished by their prudence and abilities. The first taught them the doctrine of the *Magi*, or the science of religion and government; the second accustomed them to speak truth, and to do justice; the third, to subdue their passions by temperance; and the fourth, to acquire a courage superior to every sense of fear and danger. * Excellent education of the Persian princes.

* Plat. in Alcib. i.

Causes which rendered this education fruitless.

Without examining, whether it would be more proper to separate these objects of instruction, or to unite them in forming a good moral and political system, it is evident that the fruits of such an education, supposing (what appears to me incredible) that it continued in use after the time of Cyrus, must be soon lost in the intoxication of despotism, in the bosom of luxury, effeminacy, and voluptuousness, surrounded with every object the most likely to corrupt the head and the heart. The kings of Persia, intoxicated with pride and the indulgence of their passions, forgot that they were men; they worshipped themselves by requiring adoration from their slaves. There is a proclamation ascribed to Xerxes, which offered a very high reward to whoever should discover a new pleasure. If such a proclamation could have existed, it serves to display the character of a despot, shut up in his seraglio, where he looks upon himself as the centre of the universe.

The Persians had some regulations in their government and legislation uncommonly excellent; but it is certain that despotism made them degenerate into grievances. The kingdom was divided into provinces; and the satraps or governors received their instructions immediately from the king, and were accountable for every thing to him. To facilitate their correspondence, couriers were established, who travelled day and night to carry despatches, which is a custom said to be introduced by Cyrus, and not known till very lately in Europe. We find that the University of Paris, at a time when they were playing a too distinguished

Satraps.

Establishment of posts.

part, employed couriers, even before the kings had any appointed for the affairs of state.

Lest the satraps should abuse their authority, the King of Persia visited the provinces in person, or sent some eminent men as commissioners, who were commonly called *the eyes and ears of the prince;* an excellent custom, provided the report of those eyes and ears was faithful and effectual. It was the duty of an officer of the crown to wake the king every morning, and say to him, *Arise, prince, and think of the functions for which Oromazes* placed you upon the throne.* These fine forms prove nothing; for if the heart is not affected with a sense of its duty, the ear is deaf to the lessons of prudence.

Administration of the finances.

The finances were looked upon, with reason, as an important object of political administration, without which every thing in a great state would languish and decay. Every province had its separate treasury, in which all contributions were deposited; and if we may judge by the sums which Alexander found in many places, they were immense; for example, fifty thousand talents of silver in ingots at Susa. During the reigns of Cyrus and Cambyses, the people taxed themselves voluntarily, for the support of the king and his army. Darius, the son of Hystaspes, imposed annual taxes, which procured him the name of the *Merchant.* The Persians paid no taxes for their lands; but money and provisions were levied from their provinces (probably the conquered provinces). Rollin observes, that the practice of receiving part of the con-

Nature of the taxes.

* *Oromazes*, or *Orosmades*, was the Persian name for God.

tributions in kind, displays wisdom, moderation, and humanity; because, in those parts of the country that were remote from commerce, the people could not turn their commodities into money, but at a considerable loss. This observation may be just, if nothing was taken from the people but what the necessities of the state required; but that cannot be easily imagined, since, in time of war, *beside these ordinary imposts, two provinces were taxed a quantity of corn, sufficient to maintain a hundred and twenty thousand men.*

Population encouraged.

Population and agriculture, two of the most important objects, and essentially united, attracted the attention of their government; and here religion went hand in hand with politics. The Persians looked upon a numerous posterity as a heavenly blessing; and the king bestowed rewards annually upon those who had many children. That population may be a blessing, it is necessary that the earth should supply sufficient nourishment for its inhabitants. Agriculture, that nurse of the human race; that source of plenty, health, and innocent pleasures; that preserver of morals, and, as Xenophon* calls it, that school of all the virtues, was, in an eminent degree, honoured and encouraged in Persia, as well as in Egypt. They even esteemed fertilizing of the earth as an act of religious merit. They acquainted the king with the state of cultivation, who punished the remissness of some, while he rewarded the industry of others; and one day in the year

Agriculture honoured.

* Xenophon's Oecon.

he partook of the feast of the labourers.* The younger Cyrus planted many trees with his own hands, which would not be a subject of encomium, if the intention did not place the amusement in the most respectable light. Even at this day, the Emperor of China, on a particular festival, holds the plough, that he may set the example to his subjects; a ceremony which, as it certainly produces the best effect, is perhaps more worthy of the throne than all those that are intended to display the pride of royalty.

Cruel necessity of war.

If the forgetting those evils which war has occasioned, could prevent similar disasters, it were well that the very name should be blotted from the annals of the world; but the passions which have always given rise to that scourge of the human race, will still continue to produce it. Although man certainly was not created to fight with his fellow-creatures, like the wolves and tigers who seem to be intended to devour other animals; and though he can only become cruel by stifling the cries of nature, yet war is found to be necessarily interwoven with the political constitution. The most just and humane princes are sometimes obliged to undertake it, either on account of injuries received from their neighbours, or ambitious powers; and, exposed to such a situation, they find it necessary to keep warriors to defend the rights of their subjects, who must be disciplined and trained to the use of arms, made valuable in the sight of their countrymen, and formidable to the enemy.

* Hyde's Rel. Pers.

hands of respectable masters, whose sole care was to make them brave, just, and wise. Those that were not bred up in this excellent school, were excluded from all honours and employments. However, we are likewise told, that the fathers had the care of the education of their children. *If you wish to be saints*, say their sacred writings, *instruct your children, because all their good deeds will be imputed to you.** To this religious motive, undoubtedly, reason added some still more affecting.

The punishment of ingratitude.

Some vices, which are too seldom punished in society, did not escape the vigilance of the Persian laws. An ungrateful person might be summoned to a trial, and punished. Our laws scarce punish in any case, but where an attack is made upon persons or their property. Sentiments of honour, or the dread of reproach, might supply the defect, if these sentiments were properly impressed upon the mind, and corruption had not rather given a lustre, than affixed a disgrace, to particular vices.

The authority of fathers.

The power of life and death which fathers had over their children, an inhuman right established among many of the ancient nations, was softened, by a prohibition of exercising it for slight faults, or a first offence. Besides, as the children had the highest respect for their fathers, there was seldom occasion for them to employ that power. They looked upon parricide as a crime naturally impossible, and therefore had no law against it.

Love of truth among the Persians.

The love of truth was a virtue which strongly characterized the Persians, as it was held in-

* Hyde.

famous among them to tell a lie; as well as to live upon credit, because meanness and falsehood seemed to be inseparable from such a life. A people whose conduct and conversation are regulated by truth, must be both respectable and happy; but when they are led by self-interest, and their morals corrupted, it is impossible but they must be contaminated by falsehood; which undoubtedly the Persians experienced, when they gave themselves up to luxury, and of course to a love of riches, which annihilates every virtuous sentiment.

Eunuchs.

The odious custom of having eunuchs to guard the women, which prevailed universally in Asia, is ascribed to their dissoluteness. They are not only accused of carrying polygamy and concubinage to the greatest excess, but likewise of incestuous marriages with their own mothers and daughters, which were perhaps limited to a few examples, as they are both repugnant to modesty and sound policy.* Plutarch tells us, that Artaxerxes Mnemon married one of his daughters by the advice of his mother, who, to flatter his criminal passion, was not ashamed to say, *It is you whom God has given as the only law to the Persians, as the sole rule of what is honourable and dishonourable, vicious or virtuous.*

Shameful servility of the Persians.

Such, at last, was the servile disposition of the Persians, that they could look upon the crimes of their sovereign with a kind of veneration. They did not even blush at being his slaves; and we are told, that after having been

* Philo alleges, that the religion of Zoroaster recommended marriage with mothers. The Egyptians authorized marriage with sisters.

their religion from the errors which had been introduced by the Sabians. It is from him that they derived the doctrine of two principles, not such as it has been since taught by the Manicheans, but free from absurd contradictions. The purpose of this doctrine is to explain the origin of evil, so as to show that God is not the author of it. According to the Persian system, the good principle is a supreme, eternal, and independent being, who created light and darkness, and is called *Oromazes*; the bad principle, *Arimanus*, derives his origin from darkness; and, though opposed in every thing to the purposes of Oromazes, yet, in spite of himself, ministers continually to his glory, and from thence the mixture of good and evil is derived. This contest will last to the end of the world. Then there will be a resurrection, the light separated from darkness, and the righteous and the wicked shall meet the fate they have deserved.

The Sadder. The *Sadder*, the sacred book of the Persians, which has been made known all over Europe by the learned Thomas Hyde, contains sublime ideas united with most excellent lessons of morality. Nor is this to be wondered at; for in every age, and in every country, sound reason may lead man to all that forms human wisdom, when confined within the bounds of nature. The duties prescribed to the *Magi*, or priests, were well calculated for a station to be filled by men who were to set an example, and give instructions to the ignorant. The following precepts relate to the Chief Priest. I. He must preserve himself spotless, because God has made choice of him to be holy. II. He

should take tithes from the laity, but only as Almoner of the Deity, that he may divide among the poor the tribute paid by the rich. III. He ought to be not only well skilled in the law, but likewise in every science, because it is his duty to instruct all the professors of his religion. IV. He ought to study chiefly to distinguish truth from error. V. He should fear only God, and hate nothing but sin. VI. Though he may be honoured with revelations from heaven, he ought not to publish them; because he will perplex the people, who ought to be guided by the written law.*

Austere lives of the Magi.

While the Magi adhered to these regulations, they must have shown themselves worthy ministers of their religion, excellent magistrates for the preservation of morals; and the more respectable, as the influence they had over the minds of the people was employed solely for the public good. Their manners were austere, but without misanthropy; and, according to the description of Diogenes Laertius, they were plainly dressed, and slept upon the ground. Their food was herbs, cheese and bread, and their principal employment, praying to God, and exhorting the people to live good lives: But, like the Egyptian and Chaldean priests, they acquired too much power to remain confined to the discharge of their religious duties. The kings and great men were educated by them. No important affair was determined without their advice; and Pliny assures us, that, even in his time, *they commanded the King of Kings.*† As the credit of the Magi depended

Their too great authority.

* See the Universal History, Vol. III., or Hyde, Rel. vet. Pers. 13.
† L. 30. c. 1.

chiefly upon their knowledge, they kept it a mystery; and no foreigner was allowed to receive instruction without leave from the prince, which was a favour granted to Themistocles at the time when he served the Persians against his own country. The Greek philosophers greatly respected the schools of the Magi; and it is said that, from them, Pythagoras derived some of his doctrines.

How the ancient priests acquired too much power.

Let your imagination glance over Persia, Chaldea, Egypt and India, and return by Germany and Gaul, and you will find every where in the priesthood nearly the same attachment to the interests of their order, and the same conduct. All the ancient priests, who formed a distinct class of men, had likewise their separate interests, of which they were excessively jealous. Being the depositaries of religion and science, the umpires of kings, and the oracles of the people, how was it possible but they should frequently abuse their power; a power most excellent when solely employed for the preservation of morals, but equally fatal when it becomes an instrument of the passions? It was an error common to all the different governments, or rather the effect of human ignorance, which could not fix a proper boundary between civil authority and religious offices, nor respect the priesthood in proportion to the advantages arising from it, without furnishing it with means and motives for employing them against the public interest. The more the clerical function is venerable, the greater care should be taken to prevent its being abused; but religion having been one of the principal foundations of civil society, we should not be

surprised to find that its ministers, after having guided the morals and opinions of the people, should possess the secret, and of course the desire, to acquire wealth, or assume the reins of government.

A remarkable passage from an ancient Persian book.

The Persian historians celebrate one of the ancient kings, whose name was Hushang, to whom they ascribe their first code of laws, the division of the empire into provinces, and the invention of most of the instruments of agriculture, and likewise the writing a book, whose title is, *The Wisdom of all Ages*. This book is full of enthusiasm and excellent maxims. The passage which I shall transcribe from the Universal History, will give an idea of Eastern wisdom. 'Great kings are gods upon earth, who, 'in power, wisdom and goodness, are as much 'superior to the rest of men, as God is superior to them. Let not their high rank, however, lead them to behave with severity to 'their subjects. The thunder is heard but seldom; the sun shines every day. For one instance of vengeance, God bestows ten thousand tokens of his favour. Kings ought to 'imitate him by doing all the good they can. 'Let them recollect, that though it is in their 'power to take away life, it is not in their 'power to restore it. Therefore, be careful 'not to decide rashly, and prevent fruitless regret. Ministers are instruments in the hands 'of monarchs; but it is to these that the people must have recourse when they are ill 'used. Let a king be careful in the choice of 'his ministers; for the laying offences to their 'charge will have as little effect in calming 'his enraged people, as for a murderer to plead

'in his vindication, that it was his sword, and 'not himself, which slew his neighbour. Wick-'ed princes have sometimes had good mini-'sters; but virtuous princes have seldom con-'tinued bad ministers long in their service,' &c. However ancient this work may be, it certainly cannot be of so early a date as is represented. Men are possessed with a strange passion for heightening the value of things, by giving them a fabulous antiquity, when their greatest merit should consist in their conformity with good sense.

THE

ANCIENT HISTORY

OF THE

INDIANS.

If we were to judge of the antiquity of a people from the beauty and fertility of the country they possess, the Indians, especially upon the banks of the River Ganges, were perhaps the first civilized nation. This conjecture is confirmed by their monuments; and, though the fragment written by Ctesias upon India, is filled with falsehoods, and the Oriental histories of it are still more fabulous, yet it is known that the ancients travelled into that country for instruction; and there are even now, learned men of sound judgment, who believe that the Egyptians, and the Greeks after them, received both their religion and philosophy from thence. It is scarcely to be doubted that the doctrine of the metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, had its origin there, which is a sufficient proof of its antiquity. That souls have passed from one body into another, has been believed from time immemorial, both in Egypt and in Asia. Antiquity of the Indians.

According to Arrian, an author of veracity, the Indians were a free people, and divided into seven different classes, which were never Division into classes.

confounded by intermarriages. One class were *Inspectors*, whose duty it was to give an account to the prince of the conduct of the rest. The Labourers enjoyed a degree of respect proportioned to the importance of agriculture. They were never taken from the country to be otherwise employed. In time of war, an inviolable law preserved both their persons and property untouched. They imagined that every thing was wanting, unless the lands were cultivated; and that could not be done properly if husbandmen were not protected. The class of the Bramins, or Brachmans, of whom we shall speak particularly, had the preeminence over all the rest, because they were the masters of religion and science, and enjoyed all the powers of the priesthood. This separation of the *Castes*, or different ranks of the people, still continues. We have seen the unavoidable inconveniencies with which it is attended. It is a silly prejudice which persuades people, that when children are confined to their father's profession, every art must be brought to perfection; whereas the experience, both of Egypt and Asia, proves the contrary. Besides, the *Castes* mutually detest one another, even from a religious principle, which is an enormous fault in society.

Inconvenience of this practice.

The Indians were in a great measure indebted for their renown to the Brachmans, whom we call Bramins. These were as much respected as the Persian Magi, or Egyptian priests. They were exempted from taxes, consulted at court, and governed the minds of the people. They were astrologers, prophets, philosophers, and theologians; and their doctrine

The sciences and morals of the Bramins.

was supported by an austerity in life, which excited the admiration even of strangers. They stood exposed to the scorching sun, and made their bodies proof against the severest trials; despising those who die of old age and infirmities, and ordering themselves to be burnt alive when life became a burden to them; as was done by Calanus, in presence of Alexander's army. Many of them wore no clothes, and therefore were called *Gymnosophists*.

Doctrine of the metempsychosis.

The Metempsychosis was one of the fundamental points of their doctrine; and the persuasion that human souls passed into the bodies of brutes, prevented them from eating any kind of flesh; a groundless opinion, which, however, saved the spilling the blood of animals, and had likewise the additional advantage of checking the human passions, either by temperance, or through fear; for they imagined, that the punishment of crimes would be to have their souls thrust into some unclean or detested animal after death. There are such numbers of pernicious prejudices in the world, that some kind of respect is due to those which produce good effects.

Theology of the Bramins.

According to the testimony of Strabo, the Brachmans believed that the world had a beginning, and will have an end; that the Supreme Being was omnipresent; that in early times the fountains ran with milk, wine, oil, and honey; but man having abused such advantages, was deprived of them by God, who ordered, that in future he should gain his bread by his labour. The Vedam, which is the sacred book of the Brachmans, contains the same principles, with a mixture of absurd

fables. It teaches the people to believe in a Supreme Being, who is a pure and perfect spirit; that from him proceeded an order of spirits, of whom some have been degraded by committing sin; that these wicked genii called *Deoutas*, are banished to a material world, where they are the cause of evil; that *Vistnou* assumed a human form, to deliver man from the tyrannical power of the *Deoutas;* that after a course of trials and transmigrations, the soul is to be reunited to its origin, in order to enjoy eternal happiness. This is the foundation of the Indian theology, from whence Pythagoras borrowed his principal opinions. Brachma, from whom the Indian priests derived their name, is one of the chief genii employed in the government of the world. As to Vistnou, who was incarnated, he is the same whom the Chinese worshipped by the name of Fo or Fohi; the Japonese by that of Amida, &c. The Indian reveries have penetrated every where, and part of them have been adopted by Plato. Origen attempted to adapt them to the Christian system, with which they seem at the first glance to have a resemblance; 'which 'disappears upon a close examination,' says M. de Bougainville, 'but proves at least, that the 'Indian religion, like all others, was originally 'founded on the primary truths known to all 'men, and which make the substance of the 'natural revelation, which is as old as the 'creation.' *

* Memoires de l'Academie des Inscript. tom. xviii.

These people represent the world as a flat surface, with a mountain in the middle, round which the sun, moon, stars, and other planets revolve. Above the planetary sky they imagine there are six others, the happy dwelling possessed by spirits of the second class, either pure or purified. There cannot be a stronger proof of ignorance in astronomy. The human mind always regales itself with fables, before it observes nature. The Indians were capable of excelling in the sciences, if their genius had not been absorbed in visionary contemplations. The invention of the game of chess, and the Arabian ciphers, is ascribed to them. Their real antiquity, according to M. Freret, without paying any regard to the fabulous accounts which give them much earlier existence, may be traced back three thousand one hundred and two years before Jesus Christ. *

The Indians ignorant of astronomy.

Superstition alone has been able to establish an ancient custom, still subsisting in India, the mention of which is sufficient to make nature shudder. When a man dies, one of his wives has the privilege of being burnt alive upon his funeral pile; and the women, encouraged by the Bramins, who persuade them that it is a meritorious deed, contend with one another for the prerogative. Is there any thing impossible to imaginations heated by superstitious madness? It transforms the Deity into a tyrant, and is persuaded that he is honoured by the effusion of human blood; it can find uncommon sanctity in an excess of madness and

The women burn themselves upon the funeral pile of their husbands.

* Mem. de l'Academie des Inscript. tom. xviii.

folly, while true religion breathes only prudence and mildness. The cause of so many evils having overspread the earth at different times, is, that men have almost never consulted reason upon a subject of the utmost importance.

THE

ANCIENT HISTORY

OF THE

SCYTHIANS AND CELTÆ.

Reflections upon the Scythians and Celtæ.

We shall leave to the learned the history of the Scythians (at present the Tartars) and the Celtæ, ancient inhabitants of Gaul, who are called Gomerites, from Gomer, grandson of Noah. What can be known of a people who possessed neither learning nor monuments, a nation of wanderers, who lived only upon their flocks and rapine? It will be sufficient to give the outlines of their character, when history requires their appearance.

Excessive barbarism of the Scythians.

If we were to judge of the Scythians from the pictures drawn by Horace and Justin, their virtues and morals are worthy of being held forth as examples for mankind. But if they were totally ignorant of agriculture, which gives birth to civilization, if, as Herodotus says, their daughters could not be married until they had killed a man with their own hands; if they took pleasure in drinking out of the skulls of those whose blood they had shed; without mentioning the human victims which they offered up to their gods, they were cer-

tainly much more deserving of detestation than esteem. Their morals and government were those of a set of robbers, who observed certain laws among themselves, because the principles of natural justice are inherent in all men, and necessary to form the ties of society. The Scythians, under different appellations, have made some of the finest countries in the world swim in blood. The Celtæ, who, though their manners were at bottom the same, were not quite so savage, became famous in the time of the Romans. If we were to judge from the similarity of manners, customs, and opinions, almost all the European nations are of the Celtic race; but that is a matter not worthy of our inquiry. The nearer that men approach to a state of nature, and the less their original character is altered or modified by civil institutions, the stronger will be the resemblance; and in this respect, a most striking conformity may be seen between the ancient and modern world.

ANCIENT HISTORY

OF

THE PEOPLE OF ASIA.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

People of Asia Minor.

To study the history of the ancient nations of Asia-Minor, the Phrygians, Trojans, Lycians, Lydians, Mysians, &c. would be time thrown away, since we find them filled with fables, and very little useful information. We know that, in the time of the Trojan war, which was about twelve centuries before the Christian era, wealth, and the arts of luxury, had already distinguished these famous countries, which had been enriched by commerce. The Phrygians, in particular, traded with great success. What the poets tell us of Midas, Tantalus, and Priam, and what Herodotus says of the wealth of Crœsus, had some foundation in truth; but in such matters, fiction or exaggeration adds to the reality. Homer would not have described the palace of Priam, nor the ostentation of the Trojans, with such splendour, if there had not been plenty of gold in the country.

Subjection of the Asiatics naturally to be expected.

After the description which has been given of the principal nations of Asia, this remark will be sufficient to show, that the Asiatics, in general debauched by effeminacy, must sooner or later have been subjected to a foreign yoke. Their wealth, and the excellence of their climate, were strong temptations to conquerors; golden armour, held in feeble hands, could make but a slender defence. Priam complains in Homer, that his children spent the night in feasting and dancing; and when? even when the enemy were at their gates. Besides, as the Asiatics had lost every idea of liberty, none could be found very anxious for the public good. Slaves change their masters without reluctance.

Simplicity of ancient manners.

That a simplicity of manners should subsist in courts, amidst all the pomp and splendour of ancient times, is very surprising. Magnificent dress, sumptuous furniture, perfumes, the multitude of slaves, did not prevent people of the highest rank from employing themselves in works looked upon by us as servile; of which Homer gives us many examples. The sons of Priam got ready their father's chariot, harnessed the mules and horses, and filled his trunks with their own hands. The women never appeared in public without veils. They worked in their own apartments, and washed their clothes in the river. Moses gives a similar account. The refinements of luxury were not then known, because the arts were not arrived at perfection; and the force of old customs is only forgotten by insensible degrees. This ancient simplicity of manners would deserve a higher encomium, if it had been the effect of reason and pru-

dence, rather than of circumstances; but it was mixed with too great a portion of vice and ignorance to be entitled to esteem; of which we may judge even from the history of the patriarchs.

Europe superior to Asia.

Asia was certainly the cradle of the human race, of society, and of the arts and sciences. What we are about to see in Europe, besides its conformity with our manner of living and thinking, is more interesting to us from the nature of the objects. All the springs of the human mind will be displayed to our view in the history of Greece; and the Roman greatness will still farther extend the sphere of our ideas, views, and sentiments.

ELEMENTS

OF

GENERAL HISTORY.

ANCIENT HISTORY.

PART SECOND.

HISTORY OF GREECE.

General idea of the Grecian history.

AFTER having travelled over an immense extent involved in darkness, without any certain path to guide our steps, at the name of Greece our spirit seems to rest from its labours, and the brilliant period of history begins to shine forth. True heroes, celebrated sages, immortal geniuses, the masterpieces of perfection appear; and we already anticipate the pleasures derived from admiring the wonderful efforts of liberty, and the resources of good policy. But before we can arrive at the object to which we steer our course, a dreadful barrier presents

Their fables.

itself, when we cast our eyes on the Grecian antiquities; for no people in the world have handed down such a multitude of fables, upon the subject of their origin. Every town in this little corner of the world boasts its gods

and demi-gods, of whom such extravagances are related, that history is quite disfigured by the heap of absurdities. We shall therefore leave systems and conjectures for the inquiries of the learned; and, without being ashamed, confess that we are ignorant of what we could not attain but at the expense of important knowledge; and shall satisfy our curiosity by making some useful observations on the Greeks of the early ages.

FIRST EPOCH.

HISTORY OF GREECE, FROM THE FABULOUS TIMES TILL THE WAR AGAINST THE PERSIANS.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE FABULOUS AND HEROIC TIMES.

The first Greeks were savages.

THE antiquity of the Greeks is universally acknowledged, and they are said to be descended from Javan son of Japhet, which is an opinion not worthy of our spending time to examine. They were at first mere savages, without any ideas of reason, sentiment, society, or any thing which could make them to be distinguished as men. * Their first discoveries were, the art of

* Pausan. in Arcad.

building huts, feeding upon acorns, and covering their bodies with the skins of animals. So far were they from having the smallest idea of government, that they were even ignorant of marriage, and lived like wild beasts. Such a spectacle is exceedingly humiliating for mankind; but it shows us what we owe to laws and arts, without which we should have still continued in the same savage state.

Foreigners established in Greece.

About two thousand years before the Christian era, a colony, perhaps of Egyptians, conquered Greece, and probably introduced the first ideas of religion; which has contributed more than any other means to civilize the human race. It is imagined that the famous Titans, Saturn, Jupiter, &c. who were afterwards worshipped as gods, were the chiefs of that colony. They made no great progress, for their ancient manners still subsisted when some new strangers came to settle in their country, who collected their wandering families, taught them the comforts of social life, and founded some towns, or rather villages, whose names at a future period became famous in history. The kingdoms of Athens, Argos, Sparta, and Thebes, sprung from the bosom of barbarism.

Obstacles to the progress of society.

Different natural revolutions, such as deluges and earthquakes, which seem to have detached some islands in the Ægean sea from the Continent, greatly retarded the establishment of societies, and the culture of morals in Greece; and these obstacles were much increased by invasions and perpetual ravages. Attica, which is the country of Athens, being the most barren, experienced fewer of these misfortunes;

and the Athenians boasted, that they sprung from the country which they inhabited (Αυτοχθονες *). Athens founded by Cecrops. Cecrops, an Egyptian, settled there fifteen hundred and eighty-two years before our era, and, having married the daughter of King Acteus, succeeded to the throne. He founded the city of Athens, which was known at first by the name of Cecropia, and civilized these savage people, by introducing religion among them, and making them submit to the laws of conjugal union, with which they were at that time so little acquainted, that the children were known by the name of their mothers. Other laws were established, and tribunals erected. The Areopagus, which was a court instituted for the punishment of murderers, is the most remarkable monument of Cecrops. No tribunal had so high a reputation. The trials were held during the night, in the open air, and the judges were not allowed to hearken to the powers of eloquence, but to decide upon a simple exposition of facts; and, if we may credit Demosthenes, they never passed an unjust sentence. He established the Areopagus.

Thus foreigners laid the foundation of civilization in Greece. The Egyptian Danaus, who was master of the kingdom of Argos, introduced agriculture, and the Egyptian arts, into that country. The Phenician Cadmus, settled in Bœotia, peopled Thebes, made them acquainted with the culture of the vine, the art of melting and working metals; and, lastly, taught them the precious foundation of extensive knowledge, by instructing them to write the alphabet. Introduction of the arts.

* Autochthones.

The passion of the Greeks for fable.

The Greeks, enamoured of fable, and anxious to derive every thing from the Gods, not out of gratitude, but vanity, gave a divine origin to these human inventions. Their unintelligible mythology darkened and rendered every thing unnatural, and disfigured the gods whom they had borrowed from the Egyptians and Phenicians, so that they could scarce be known; but through this obscurity, we see the struggles of barbarism against the great benefactors of the human race. Triptolemus, the companion of Ceres, who endeavoured to inspire them with a passion for agriculture, frequently run the risk of being murdered; and Bacchus was exposed to the same hazard, for procuring them the benefit of the vine; which shows, that, in proportion as men are unhappy and ignorant, they are stupidly blind to their own interests. They reject the greatest advantages if accompanied with labour, and the most salutary laws appear intolerably burdensome. They prefer idleness, licentiousness, and all the horrors of a savage state, to the infinite advantages which are to be enjoyed in society, because it imposes laws upon them which they cannot endure; as may be observed at this day in many parts of America. All over the world, even among civilized nations, we see mankind sighing after happiness, while they are rejecting the means by which it may be procured.

They at first opposed agriculture.

Council of the Amphyctions.

The Greeks divided, and under the command of a number of petty kings, always at war with each other, at last became sensible that they could neither acquire strength nor security, but by forming an union. Amphyction, a little

time after Cecrops and Deucalion's deluge, introduced an establishment, which became a master-stroke in politics. Twelve cities formed a league for their common interest, and twice every year sent deputies to Thermopylæ. These formed the Council of the Amphyctions, which became so celebrated in the Grecian history. They were the ultimate judges in the affairs of the confederacy, and quelled rebellions by force of arms. This respectable league was confirmed by their regard for religion; and the Council were, in a particular manner, charged to take care of the temple of Delphos, to which people came from all quarters to consult the oracle of Apollo. What effects cannot such a motive have upon superstitious minds? It could not be employed for a better purpose.

Temple of Delphos.

The account of the Theban war, the expedition of the Argonauts, and the siege of Troy, must be left to the poets; for here historical facts are drowned in fable. I shall therefore confine myself to making a few observations.

The war of Thebes, where seven kings entered into a confederacy against Eteocles, is a dreadful monument of fraternal hatred. Two brothers contended for the crown, and slew one another, after having deluged their country with a torrent of blood, which, in the end, proved the destruction of the city. Though the injustice of Eteocles seems to vindicate Polynices, yet all the Ancients looked upon the latter as unworthy of interment, because he had kindled the rage of war in his country; so repugnant are the sentiments of humanity to ambition and personal interest.

Theban war.

Expedition of the Argonauts.

The expedition of the Argonauts to Colchis, about which a thousand conjectures have been hazarded, was an attempt so much the more bold, as the Greeks were but little acquainted with navigation. Exceedingly ignorant of Astronomy, they steered their course by the Great Bear, and probably had neither sounding-leads nor anchors. Their ships or barks were easily dragged along the shore. However, if we may believe Eustathius, the famous commentator on Homer, the commerce of the Euxine, or Black Sea, was the great object of their expedition. Supposing this to be the case, it is matter of astonishment, with what slender means they hazarded so great an undertaking.

The Trojan war.

What they performed a few years after in Asia, makes a most remarkable epocha in history. The whole Grecian states united to revenge an affront offered to a single Greek; and neither the power of Troy, nor the wealth of King Priam, could overcome this confederacy. The Asiatic power was compelled, for the first time, to submit to European valour; and the fate of Paris will inform princes, that the yielding to an unworthy passion may prove the ruin of their country. The taking of Troy is commonly believed to have happened eleven hundred and eighty-four years before Christ; but according to the chronology of the Arundel Marbles, which were found at Paros, it happened in the twelve hundred and ninth year. These ancient Marbles fix the different epochas down from Cecrops to the time of Philip, and we have not a more certain guide in ancient chronology; yet they were engraved only two hun-

The Arundel Marbles.

dred and sixty-four years before the Christian era.

The Trojan war was as injurious to the interest of the country, as it was truly glorious to the Greeks who were engaged in the expedition, by reason of the disorders occasioned by the long absence of their kings, and the enterprizes of robbers and pirates, who seized the opportunity of committing depredations upon the people. But about fourscore years after, they experienced much more fatal misfortunes. Hercules had been excluded from the crown of Mycenæ, notwithstanding his famous exploits; and the Heraclidæ, his descendants, being persecuted, were obliged to quit Greece, but returned in arms, when the country, torn in pieces and dejected, was ready to fall a prey to superior force. Argos, Sparta, and Mycenæ, were subdued, and terror spread on all sides; which made several colonies cross the sea, to settle in the islands, and on the coasts of Asia-Minor, of whom the Ionians, Eolians, and Dorians are the most celebrated. Minos, king of Crete, whom the poets have made judge of Hell, had for a long time alleged that he was inspired with a new system of laws, which he desired to establish; but if we are to judge from humanity, these laws, though Lycurgus took them for his model, appear little entitled to be thought of miraculous origin, for they related chiefly to war, and never prevented disturbances or civil discord. From a body of turbulent citizens, Minos formed gallant warriors. He did not allow young people to question the rectitude of the principles they were taught, which was highly approved by Plato, but could not fail

Misfortunes which followed.

The laws of Minos.

to rivet prejudice and error, along with sound principles. Cannot respect for the laws go hand in hand with common sense? Celibacy was forbidden in Crete; and we are assured, contrary to all probability, that this legislator permitted unnatural crimes, that fathers might not be burdened with too many children.

CHAPTER II.

BARBARISM OF THE HEROIC AGES; SUPERSTITIONS, &c.

We may depend upon the authority of the great painter of ancient manners, that the heroic ages were times of barbarism. In this respect, we find Homer an excellent historian, and we may select much interesting knowledge, even from his fables.

Power of their kings very limited.

These kings, who have been thought so powerful, had very little authority over their subjects. They deliberated in a select council, and the decision was either approved or rejected in a general assembly. The prerogative of the prince was to give the first vote, to hear complaints, to judge of disputes, and to command the troops; to which may be added, their presiding in religious matters. Erectheus King of Athens, was the first who separated the offices of priest and king, which he did in favour of his brother Butes; but we do not find that his example was followed. In one

word, the Grecian government was like that of almost all barbarous nations; they were directed rather by established customs, than the authority of their chiefs, to whom they were but very little subjected.

War was the principal employment of the Greeks, who were ignorant of the law of nations, which is so necessary to soften and restrain its horrors. This law, which is founded upon the first principles of nature and morality, is at bottom the law of humanity; to which must be added, the mutual agreements entered into by different nations. The reciprocal duties of nations are the same with those of individuals. Self-preservation makes it lawful for a man to use violence; but he who kills another, without being first attacked, or he who seizes another person's property by force, is a robber and assassin, deserving execration and public punishment. In the same manner, every unjust war is an offence proportionably heinous, as it occasions more robberies and murders; and all wars are unjust when undertaken to give vent to the passions, or when they exceed the bounds of natural equity. Sensible minds can never hear that expression, *the right of the strongest*, but with horror; an expression which must have been derived from the language of the Cannibals: however, such was the right of the Greeks.

The Greeks ignorant of the law of nations.

It is a matter of doubt, whether the Greeks had any general idea of virtue, because their word ἀρετη, which expresses it, had no other signification, in the first ages, but bravery. It must be allowed, that in a state of war, and perpetual invasions, bravery might make up

What they called virtue.

for the want of other virtues. Fierce in combat, and equally so after victory, they treated their prisoners as victims destined to cruelty; and the women, even princesses, were reduced to slavery, and experienced sufferings infinitely worse than death. We must therefore have a dreadful idea of the reprisals. How many ages passed before men became sensible how much it was for their own advantage to do good to their fellow-creatures, or as little harm as possible, when unfortunately compelled to hurt them!

Ferocity in war.

Their ignorance of the art of war.

The heroes, the great captains mentioned in Homer, were so ignorant of the art of war, that the siege of Troy bore no resemblance to a siege. Their camp was at a considerable distance from the town; and an open plain between, served for the field of battle. No lines of circumvallation, no attacks, no scaling of walls, nor any warlike machines, were to be seen. Bodily strength accomplished every thing in their combats; and no skill was shown but in darting their javelins; for the first stroke of the sword commonly decided the fate of the warriors. Their chariots frequently made the conductors of no use in the field; and, in a thousand rencounters, only served to embarrass the combatants; yet they were their only cavalry. In a word, the great art with them was to lay a snare, form an ambuscade, or surprise a party. Their principal object was pillage; for their booty served them for pay, and was shared between the chiefs and the soldiers. This is another instance of the resemblance of their manners to those of the Germans.

The Grecian fleet, at the siege of Troy, consisted of twelve hundred vessels, but the largest of them, according to Homer, carried only a hundred and twenty men. There was no iron employed in their construction, and the use of the saw was unknown; therefore they may be compared to the canoes of the Indian savages.

The number of the Grecian fleet.

We may form some idea of the navigation of the Greeks, from their excessive ignorance of astronomy. For a long time their year consisted of only three, four, or six months. They knew very few of the constellations, and not one of the planets, but Venus; yet they believed, till the time of Pythagoras, that the Venus of the morning was not the Venus of the evening. Certainly those Egyptians and Phenicians who settled in Greece, did not carry the sciences of their country along with them; but, if they had, it is impossible that they could flourish in these districts, which were torn in pieces by war and discord. Learning and the arts have commonly prospered in the bosom of peace and tranquillity; and, from that cause, the Greeks of Asia-Minor were the first who possessed the double advantage, of being happy and well instructed. About three hundred years after the Trojan war, that country was rendered famous by giving birth to Homer; whose two epic poems, notwithstanding their faults, which a kind of literary fanaticism has fruitlessly endeavoured to palliate, are prodigies of genius, and sources of much excellent instruction. Independent of the sublimity of the poetry, the descriptions are so accurate, that they must be highly pleasing to all

The ancient Greeks knew nothing of astronomy.

Homer was of Asia-Minor.

who have a desire to be acquainted with ancient manners.

Rusticity of the heroic manners.

His descriptions of the Grecian festivals plainly show the rusticity of their manners. Even the kings knocked down a bull, or cut the throat of a ram, with their own hands, flead them, and cut them in pieces; and, being unacquainted with roasting, had them broiled. Agamemnon served up the chine of an ox to Ajax. At their meals they were voracious and slovenly. Let us not be surprised at the foul language with which they publicly abused one another when in a passion; even their gods were almost as barbarous, and as little masters of their temper.

Laws in favour of agriculture.

By some ancient laws which were ascribed to Triptolemus, they were prohibited from injuring animals, and they could only make offerings of the fruits of the earth to the gods; but superstition abolished these regulations, which were so favourable to agriculture. Cecrops, in like manner, forbid the sacrificing of animals. The first legislators were much attached to agriculture, being justly persuaded that it must civilize the people, and therefore limited the quantity of land which every one could possess; prohibited them from alienating the inheritance of their ancestors, and from

Other laws.

mortgaging lands in tillage. They showed an equal attention to marriage, and punished adultery, by making the guilty person pay a fine to the husband who could prove the offence, and the father of the disloyal woman restored to his son-in-law all the presents which he had received before marriage. Though the eldest enjoyed particular privileges, yet the succession

was shared among the children by lot. Murder was punished with death; but they had no public officers for discovering the murderers. They remained at liberty during the trial, and pleaded in opposition to the relations of the deceased, who were the prosecutors. The murderer might fly, or make his peace with the friends of the person murdered. Every crime might be remitted for a sum of money. Such has been the jurisprudence of almost all barbarous nations, and, in particular, that of the Germans.

Eleusinian mysteries much celebrated.

If we may believe ancient authors, the mysteries of Eleusis, a town near Athens, which were instituted in honour of Ceres, or, according to the fabulous traditions, by herself, were an admirable method of softening the manners of the people, and inspiring them with wisdom. 'Among many other advantages which we 'have derived from Athens,' said Cicero, 'this 'is the greatest; for it has not only taught us 'to live cheerfully, but to die in peace, in the 'hope of a more happy futurity.'* There is reason to suppose that these mysteries, like the Egyptian, concealed from the eyes of the vulger a doctrine which was superior to the common superstitions, chiefly declaring the unity of god and a future state; but the inviolable secrecy in which they were enveloped, very reasonably infuses distrust. If they contained nothing but what was noble, true, and useful, wherefore be afraid of the light? 'Cato was 'surprised that one southsayer could look in 'the face of another without laughing. May 'not the same thing be said of two people ini-

* De leg. 2.

'tiated in these mysteries?' This reflection of M. de Bougainville will appear still more just, if we consider that the Eleusinian mysteries were instituted in the days of barbarism.* However, it must be owned, that philosophers might be afraid of the inspection of a people who were superstitious to a degree of fanaticism.

Oracles derived from imposture and superstition.

Oracles were blindly credited at that time. Nothing was done without consulting them; and the awkward artifices of the priests and priestesses imposed upon every body. Oracles and judicial astrology may be placed on a level. They were both the fruit of interested knavery and foolish superstition. Whatever wonders have been related, an unprejudiced mind can give no credit to them after the slighest examination. He will see equivocal answers artfully expressed, as if the Deity was afraid lest the event should give him the lie. He will find impostures proved, and one instance gives sufficient ground for suspecting many more. Oracles and divination are to be seen among the savages and all ignorant nations, which is an evident proof that they originate in the weakness of the human mind. If the many millions of false predictions had been preserved, along with the few which chance has verified, there never could have been a serious question about a subject which must be seen through at the first glance, if we will consult common sense instead of authorities.

The mythology of the Greeks inexplicable.

The extravagances of the religion, or mythology of the Greeks, are sufficiently known,

* Vid. Mem. de l'Acad. des Inscrip. tom. xxi.

and attempts are made to explain them by systems and allegories; but it is like endeavouring to find a meaning for the dreams of a man in the delirium of a fever. The nation received the gods which had been brought among them by strangers, to which they added some of their own creation. Ignorance, and a passion for the marvellous, gave weight to all kinds of fables; and some minds were to be found naturally disposed to believe even the most absurd. Undoubtedly the poets followed the vulgar traditions. Homer and his cotemporary Hesiod, have, with very good reason, been called the theologians of the people. Though their Jupiter is superior to the other Deities, and Hesiod in his Theogony admits a chaos, from whence the world was produced by a supreme power, yet the primitive truths disappear in their works, like a drop of water in the ocean. It was reserved for the philosophers, if they could not establish the truth, at least to cry down error. It is alleged that Orpheus taught a sublime theology before the Trojan war; and some excellent poems upon the Deity are ascribed to him. Proclus quotes the following passage: *Every thing that exists, whatever hath been, or shall be, was originally contained in the fruitful bosom of Jupiter. Jupiter is the first and the last, the beginning and the end; from him all beings are derived, &c.* The poet of the Argonauts is transformed into Plato. But proofs of such a prodigy are wanting, and every thing conspires to show the contrary.

The Greeks believed in a future state.

The Greek religion taught one thing truly excellent, the belief of a future state of rewards

and punishments. This doctrine of immortality is so noble in itself, and so salutary in its consequences, that it is sufficient to efface a multitude of errors in religious matters. Unfortunately the Elysium and Tartarus of the ancients were painted in ridiculous colours, and it is naturally to be expected, that, by learning to despise the falsehoods which were introduced into the fable, the truth blended with it may likewise, sooner or later, become contemptible.

Utility of the Grecian games.

We cannot conclude this chapter without taking notice of the Grecian games, which, in their origin, were respectable institutions, but, like all other establishments whose utility depends upon certain circumstances, degenerated into abuse. These games, by encouraging running, boxing, wrestling, and other bodily exercises, formed men for war, inspired them with that noble emulation, which, from a motive of glory alone, bids defiance to fatigue and danger. They reconciled the Greeks who were at variance, and produced those sentiments of concord in their souls, which alone could make them happy. At that time, all hostilities ceased; they partook of the same pleasures, they lived like men of one nation, and tasted all the comforts of a peaceful union; so that it must be strange if they could wish it to be disturbed. Yet afterwards, these games were one of the greatest evils which befel Greece, at the time when the *Athletæ* formed a distinct profession, excessively burdensome to the public, by the immense expense which they required; and a relish for public exhibitions became such an unbridled passion, as to stifle

The abuses of these games.

every patriotic idea. Even in the time of Solon, the victorious *Athletæ* enjoyed considerable pensions, which he thought it necessary to reduce. The evil had increased daily, from the time that Pericles (as we shall see) sacrificed the public good to the amusements of the people.

Olympic games.

The Olympic games, which were the most famous of all, were said to be established by Pelops at Olympia, in Peloponnesus, and were restored eight hundred and eighty-four years before our era, and from that time were celebrated every four years. The Olympiads, or intervals of four years from the one festival to the other, marked the chronological order of facts, the first beginning seven hundred and seventy-six years before Christ.

It is now time to proceed to the historical ages, where we shall see liberty and laws paving the way for the appearance of those great men of whom Greece had reason to be proud, instead of her fabulous divinities and barbarous heroes. We shall profit nothing by acquiring a knowledge of all the little states in that small country. Sparta and Athens demand our whole attention.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE GOVERNMENT, LEGISLATION, AND MANNERS OF SPARTA.

Revolution in Greece.

THE Greeks being naturally turbulent, provoked by misery and oppression, tired of obeying,

as their kings had rendered themselves unworthy of governing, some of them shook off the yoke; and their example was so generally followed, that an almost total revolution changed the face of the country. The ancient kingdoms having become republics, new plans of government were introduced, which still retained a tincture of barbarism; but the whole being set in agitation by a spirit of liberty, the people only waited the appearance of geniuses capable of conducting them, in order to display prodigies of heroism.

Establishment of republics.

Sparta, or Lacedemon, was destined to set the example, though she retained her kings from a respect to their origin. For about nine hundred years from the time that Peloponnesus had been retaken by the Heraclidæ, two princes of that race always jointly occupied the throne. This divided royalty; a source of perpetual dissentions tore in pieces a kingdom which was unprovided with wholesome laws, till Lycurgus at last appeared for the glory and happiness of his country.

State of Sparta before Lycurgus.

He was the son of Eunomus, king of Sparta, who was killed in an insurrection. After the death of his eldest brother Polydectes, who had no children, but left his widow pregnant, he ascended the throne, in which he might easily have supported himself, as this amorous princess made him an offer of her hand, and promised, if he would accept it, to procure an abortion. Lycurgus looked upon the proposal with horror. However, he gained time by dissembling, till the queen was delivered of a young prince, whom he acknowledged, and, taking all possible care of him, governed in quality of his tutor.

Before Christ, 898.

This generous action, however, did not secure him from all suspicion; he therefore retired, and travelled into Crete and Ionia, and perhaps even into Egypt, to study the laws and customs of other countries. The Spartans lamented his retreat, as disturbances increased greatly during his absence, and the two kings joined the voice of the people in begging him earnestly to return. He therefore came back, and, being convinced that neither a bad constitution nor licentious people could be reformed by particular laws, he determined to cut to the quick, and at once introduce an entire new system. Such an undertaking required both courage and prudence; and, following the example of Minos, whom he proposed for his model, he made an oracle declare in his favour, that the people might think he was inspired. This was an important step, but human aid was likewise necessary; and as persuasion alone was not sufficient, he resolved to strike with terror. He therefore caused the principal citizens who approved his plan of reformation, to appear under arms; so that, in the moment of execution, there was none that dared to resist.

His travels and his return.

Lycurgus, without banishing royalty, which was shared by the two branches of the family of the Heraclidæ, created a mixed government, where three powers mutually balanced each other. He scarcely left any thing to the kings but the command of the armies, and the respect which was attached to the throne. He established a senate, consisting of twenty-eight members beside the two kings, to counterbalance the influence of the princes and people;

A mixed government, consisting of three powers.

so that the royal authority might not degenerate into tyranny, nor popular liberty into rebellion. The duty of the senate was to examine and propose the business of the state, which the people had a right to approve or reject, and, of course, were masters of the legislative power. But what gave the senators an eminent advantage, was their continuing for life.

Establishment of the Ephori.

Though Herodotus and Xenophon ascribe the establishment of the Ephori to Lycurgus, which is contrary to the opinion of Aristotle and Plutarch, yet that establishment is placed about an hundred and thirty years after the time of the legislator. King Theopompus contrived this method of keeping the senate in awe. Five magistrates were chosen by the people annually, under the name of Ephori, with a power to cashier, imprison, or even put to death any of the senators. Their formidable authority even extended to the kings, whom they might arrest and suspend from their office, till an oracle gave orders for their being replaced. It is said, that when the wife of Theopompus reproached him for having lessened the royal power, he replied, *On the the contrary, I have made it stronger, for it will be more lasting!* But experience proves, that if the government was not overturned by the Ephori, it was owing to Lycurgus having composed his work with solidity. Their power leaning to despotism, was contrary to a republican spirit.

Lycurgus called in morals in support of the laws.

Lycurgus was sensible of the frailty and imbecility of laws unaccompanied with good morals. He therefore united them, that they might

mutually support one another. His intention, according to Plutarch, was to make a single family of the Lacedemonian state, where the whole people, collected like bees, should be employed for the general good of their country. * This would have been chimerical in a large kingdom; but Lycurgus realized an idea which was so greatly superior to the common views of politicians.

He banished poverty and riches.

To banish both poverty and riches, two fatal sources of corruption, all property was held in common, and the lands were equally divided. Instead of gold and silver money, he substituted iron, which was excessively unwieldy, and could be of no value out of Sparta. He prohibited all the arts which contributed to pleasure and luxury, ordering that the floors of their houses should be made only with the hatchet, and the doors with a saw: in a word, he destroyed the causes of inequality in civil life; and, by making riches contemptible, or rather annihilating them, he found means, in the midst of general poverty, to prevent any individual from being really in want. In such a state, selfishness, fraud, injustice, voluptuousness, and effeminacy, must perish for want of nourishment.

Public tables.

The being obliged to eat at public tables, which were excessively frugal, preserved that equality and harmony of which the legislator knew the great importance; and there they received constant lessons of reason as well as

* There were only nine thousand inhabitants reckoned in the city, and thirty thousand in the country. The first were properly Spartans, and the others Lacedemonians.

sobriety, by discoursing upon useful subjects; when a delicate raillery was employed to correct errors, but never exercised except with prudence, and instantly desisted from, when any one gave signs of being hurt by it. Genuine virtue was more efficacious than our deceitful politeness.

The children educated for the republic.

But above all things, Lycurgus desired that the men should be formed to his wishes by a proper education; he therefore made it one of the principal objects of his care, and the success fully answered his expectations. The children, as being the property of the state, were bred up for the state. The nurses did not bind them tight in swaddling-clothes, which made them strong, and well shaped. They taught them not to be afraid in the dark, and never to complain but from necessity. At seven years of age, they were given up to the public masters, who bred them all to the same habits, as they were all to discharge the same duties. They were accustomed to bear pain and fatigue, and to pay the most ready obedience. Those of them who particularly distinguished themselves commanded the rest, but always in presence of the elders, who were constantly attentive to reprove and correct them. No action was looked upon as indifferent. Even their plays were exercises of virtue and courage. Every old man looked upon himself as the father of all the youth; and the youth found a censor in every old man, whose advice, authority, and wisdom, was to be respected.

The reason for obliging the children to steal their food.

If the children were obliged to steal their food, which is a custom censured by many

writers, there was no appearance of theft in the case, for they took nothing but what was given up to them by the laws. The intention of this institution was to habituate them early to the stratagems of war, to danger and vigilance. When they suffered themselves to be discovered, they were severely chastised. They could not become thieves, because they had no motive to steal; but they became bold and expert, because they were compelled to it. The Spartan manners justified the practice, otherwise it must have been a folly, or a dangerous vice.

The method of exercising their reason.

While the body was hardened by labour, the powers of the mind were cultivated at the same time; not by fruitless or tiresome studies, but by a constant habit of judging and reasoning. The children were admitted to the public repasts, where they constantly heard conversations, which afforded them most excellent instruction. They were frequently interrogated upon points of morality and politics; and their opinions were asked about particular actions and particular men, to which they were required to give immediate answers, in few words, and in a judicious manner. From thence proceeded that quick penetration, that correct way of thinking, that nervous *laconism*, and those fine sayings, for which the Spartans were famous. The energy of their style shows the strength of their minds; and their example proves, that every thing may be accomplished by perseverance.

The women had their exercises.

Lycurgus extended his views still farther; and, if we may use the expression, changed the women into men, that feeble mothers might

not transmit weakly constitutions to their children. He made the women perform manly exercises, to render their bodies robust and healthy. He has been violently censured for introducing customs which were repugnant to modesty, and more particularly for making the girls appear naked at the games, when they wrestled or danced in public; yet, upon those occasions, they roused the young men to virtue, sometimes spurring them on by praise, at other times by raillery. Plutarch apologizes for this custom, and likewise for that of lending their wives to other men, that children of a more robust constitution, and greater hopes, might be reared for the state. Modesty was preserved for a considerable time by the influence of the laws. Some person asking a Spartan, what punishment was inflicted upon adulterers, he replied, *How can there be an adulterer in Sparta?* But debauchery having at last penetrated into the bosom of the republic, the customs, justified by ancient virtue, became an inveterate poison. The Spartan women were reckoned a disgrace to their sex through all Greece; and Aristotle imputes those disorders which ruined the state, to their having lost all regard for decency.

The power which the women had over the men.

While these women were proof against desires, the influence which they had over the other sex could not fail to be useful; for they were inspired with an heroic spirit, which they communicated by their conduct. Said a stranger to the wife of Leonidas, *You are the only women who govern the men.* *Yes*, said she, *and we are the only women who are the mothers of men.* But with such an ascendancy, if the

women once came to be corrupted, to which they were too much exposed in Sparta, the state of course must be ruined.

Laws for young husbands.

However, Lycurgus had regulated the commerce between the two sexes by severe laws, for a young husband could not even see his wife but by stealth; so that, far from being corrupted, or rendered effeminate by love, it proved only an incentive to their duty. Celibacy was held in contempt, and deprived of the honours and attentions which were paid to old age. A young man scorned to rise up at the approach of an illustrious commander, because he had never been married. *You have no children*, said he, *who may one day show me the same respect, and rise up at my approach.*

The Spartans falsely accused of idleness.

All speculative sciences and mechanical arts were prohibited; and, in time of peace, the citizens spent their lives in hunting and other exercises, or in useful conversations. Was this an idle life, as some writers assert? Undoubtedly it was not; since no people ever exerted themselves more zealously for the public good; but to find serious employment in their halls, where they were only engaged in conversation, it was necessary to be a Spartan. Yet men who thirsted after knowledge could not want interesting subjects; for, in a free and virtuous state, the affairs of the public become the concern of every individual.

Spartan philosophy.

The charge of rustic ignorance must appear equally unjust, when we reflect upon the attention which the Spartans showed to the cultivation of their reason. In proportion as they disdained the arts of sophistry and oratory, they studied to think and speak properly, and attend-

ed to that kind of philosophy, which, without being either subtile or verbose, forms the judgment and corrects the morals; for to speak like a Lacedemonian, and to philosophize, were reckoned the same thing. The Spartans loved poetry as a means of kindling the soul to virtue, and animating them with a desire of performing noble actions. We cannot but approve of the following song, preserved to us by Plutarch.

CHORUS OF OLD MEN.

We have been young, tho' now grown old,
Hardy in field, in battle bold.

CHORUS OF YOUNG MEN.

We are so now: let who dares try,
We'll conquer, or in combat die.

CHORUS OF CHILDREN.

Whatever ye can do or tell,
We, one day, will you both excel.

The laws of Lycurgus not written.

To judge of the plan adopted by Lycurgus, we must look back to the age in which he lived, when he saw his country in the midst of the disturbances of Greece, in itself naturally weak, and agitated by faction, filled with disorders, and exposed to the attacks of its neighbours. His desire was to form a warlike invincible republic, proof against the evils which corruption produces at home, and from those to which it is exposed by assaults from abroad; a most excellent design, and better executed than any other plan of legislation. He did not commit his laws to writing, because he intended that they should be impressed upon the hearts of

the people by education. Whatever was not essential, and depended upon circumstances, he thought might be trusted to the prudence of the citizens, when they had once imbibed good principles; and at last succeeded in rendering a government durable, which was founded upon austerity of manners. If he excluded strangers who brought nothing useful to the state, it was not, as Thucydides supposes, lest they should imitate the Spartan virtues, but from a dread that the latter might be contaminated by foreign vices. His ξενηλασια, that law against admitting strangers, excluded no deserving man, nor any talent worthy of being received in Lacedemon, but was only a barrier set up against contagion; and it must be allowed, that it was perfectly consonant with his principal intention.

Xenelasia, or exclusion of strangers.

According to the views of the legislator, the Spartans always lived as in camp; and when they marched to attack an enemy, it was not only with perfect composure, but an alacrity which nothing could disturb, as if they were led on by a Divinity. Lycurgus was too well acquainted with the human heart, not to be apprehensive that this courage would generate ambition; he therefore endeavoured to extirpate the seeds of that passion, from a persuasion that Sparta could not be truly happy, but by being satisfied with liberty and poverty, and repelling its enemies, without a desire either for dominion or conquest. He commanded them to carry on no war but in self-defence; not to pursue a vanquished enemy, or carry off their spoils; and to keep no fleet, lest they should be tempted to range the seas.

Spartan courage.

The lasting effects of the laws of Lycurgus.

An evident proof of the wisdom of these regulations in general, is the lasting effect which they produced. The passions which were kept in subjection by their manners, except perhaps the ambition of leading the army, remained submissive to the laws for the space of five hundred years. Sparta obtained the esteem and confidence, and was a long time the arbiter of Greece, because of her superior merit; but time, which changes all things, at last undermined and destroyed that noble structure. However, its duration must appear astonishing to every one who will attend to the propensities of human nature.

Spartan inflexibility sometimes barbarous.

I am far from saying, that the manners of the Spartans were a perfect model. Praise as well as censure may be carried too great a length; and while we extol an imaginary perfection, we rob genuine virtue of her greatest charms. Spartan austerity carried to excess, presents to our view some objects which are shocking to humanity. It stifled pity and the natural affections; those valuable sentiments, which it would be insufferable not to be able to conciliate with the duties of a citizen. It was horrid barbarity made them put to death children who were weakly, or of a delicate complexion, that they might have none but what were proper for making good soldiers; especially as the habit might be strengthened, and military talents make up for the weakness of the body.* It was another instance of un-

* They wished to have their kings of good stature. The Ephori, according to Theophrastus, condemned Archidamus to pay a fine for having married a very little woman. *She will not give us kings*, said they, *but kinglings*.

feeling cruelty, that, in order to accustom their children to endure pain, they scourged them, sometimes even to death, at the altar of Diana, without their daring to utter a complaint. Mothers prided themselves on receiving without emotion, nay, even with transports of joy, the news of their sons having died nobly in the field of battle, as if love of country ought to extinguish maternal tenderness. Such excesses gave a savage fierceness to the Spartan character, which frequently led them to commit acts of cruelty.

Cruelty to the Helotes.

It is impossible to read the account of their inhuman behaviour to the Ilotes, or Helotes, without horror. These were a neighbouring people whom they had reduced to slavery, and employed in agriculture and mechanical labours, treating them more like beasts than men. They not only intoxicated them, that they might inspire their children with a detestation of drunkenness and intemperance, but likewise sent their youth sometimes to lie in ambush to murder them. They put to death every Helot, who was distinguished either for his size or mien, as an enemy of the Spartan nation. Such barbarities could not be imputed to Lycurgus. They began probably, says Plutarch, after the slaves had rebelled against their masters: but are they therefore less detestable? Let us not examine whether slavery is compatible with the law of nature, except in cases where the conquered cannot be restored to liberty, without the conquerors being exposed to imminent danger. Let us not examine by what title the liberty of a man may be sold, or how he can lose it at his birth,

The rights of slaves.

though attached to his nature. The ancient practice of nations will find it difficult to support the inquiry. At least, let us boldly say, that a slave does not cease to be a man; that his services entitle him still more to the rights of humanity; and to oppress him without just cause, is to afford him pretences for taking arms against his oppressors.

The Spartans, however, deserve great praise.

If the Spartans had tempered their austere virtues with gentleness, or if they had possessed the first of all virtues, humanity, they would have been entitled to higher encomiums; but their contempt of riches, their love of glory, and of their country; their obedience to the laws, and their heroic courage, have ranked them among the first of nations. An infinite number of excellences mark their character. They had in general that greatness of soul which made Pedaretus rejoice, when he was rejected from being one of the council of three hundred, and say, *that he was happy Sparta had found three hundred citizens better than himself.*

Less superstition than among other nations.

There was much less superstition among them than the generality of other nations, and their worship showed the superiority of their judgment. All the statues of their deities, even that of Venus, were clothed in armour, that religion might go hand in hand with politics. Their sacrifices and offerings were of little value, that an useless expense might not make them lose a relish for piety. Long prayers were forbidden. They only asked of the gods to favour the deserving; a prayer which Socrates held in higher estimation, than all the offerings and ceremonies of his country. Their buryings, like every thing else in Sparta, were without pomp,

and conduced to inspire them with a contempt of death. Thus all their religious acts seemed to be directed by a practical philosophy.

A temple consecrated to Fear.

There was a temple consecrated to *Fear*, near the place where the Ephori assembled, because the Spartans looked upon fear as an essential spring of government; for, according to the opinion of Plutarch, *the most timid with respect to the laws are the most courageous against the enemy; and they who fear the least to suffer, have the greatest dread of being censured;* and of this the Spartans are a proof.

Before Christ, 900.

Precaution of Lycurgus to have his laws observed.

This famous republic, which presided a long time over the affairs of Greece, was established about nine hundred years before the Christian era. Lycurgus found great obstacles, but he surmounted them all by dint of genius and patience. It is said, that, to preserve his statutes inviolable, he went to consult the oracle of Delphos; but before he set out, he made the Spartans swear to observe them faithfully till his return. The oracle confirmed his laws, and declared that, by obeying them, Sparta would become the most famous city in the world. He then starved himself to death, that the Spartans might not be freed from their oath. The circumstances of his death are uncertain; and the marvellous, which is always to be suspected, cannot heighten the glory of great men, but, on the contrary, spreads a cloud over their merits.

War with the Messenians.

From the time of Lycurgus to the invasion of the Persians, the history of Sparta presents us with very few objects which are interesting, or can be authenticated. The Messenians, their neighbours, having engaged in two wars

against this state, lost Ithome, and some other towns, and were at last entirely subdued. From that time, the passions seemed to infringe the laws made by Lycurgus; but according to the Abbé Mably, these were only *moments of distraction, which were repaired by a long continued practice of virtue.*

Before Christ, 684. It is said that the Spartans, having been unsuccessful in the second of these wars, the oracle ordered them to procure a general from Athens. The Athenians, delighted with their distress, sent them the poet Tyrtæus, who was lame and deformed, and despised in his own country. This ridiculous general obtained the victory by the warlike enthusiasm with which his compositions inspired the soldiers. This is evidently a poetical fiction. Let us rather believe the excellent sayings ascribed to Leon, one of the Spartan kings, who, when he was asked under what kind of government men could live in the greatest safety, replied, *Under that where the people are neither rich nor poor; where probity finds many friends, and fraud finds none.* The same prince said one day, when speaking of those who gained the prize at the Olympic games, *Their glory would be much greater, if they had taken as much pains to become virtuous.* These anecdotes are instructive, while the detail of the Argive and Messenian wars are only tiresome.

The poet Tyrtæus made general.

We shall soon see Athens the rival of Sparta; but the picture which we must first draw of the former republic, will show the difference of their character and their principles, and give an idea of a new species of legislation.

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE REPUBLIC OF ATHENS TILL THE WAR AGAINST THE PERSIANS.

ATTICA was long divided into twelve independent villages, till about the time of the Trojan war, when Theseus united the whole into one body, forming a kind of republic, of which Athens was the capital. He divided the citizens into three classes, the nobles, the labourers, and the mechanics. The nobles, though fewer in number than the rest, equalled, or rather exceeded them in power, by holding all the dignities; and this form of government subsisted till Codrus devoted himself to a glorious death for the sake of his country.

The government of Athens established by Theseus, about 1259 years before Christ.

Codrus, about 1095.

The Athenians breathed a spirit of independence more than any other of the Grecian states. A quarrel between the two sons of Codrus afforded an opportunity of abolishing royalty, when they declared that Jupiter was the sole king of Athens; and the cares of government were committed to a set of magistrates, who were called Archons. Their magistracy, which for three centuries was perpetual and hereditary, had too great an appearance of royalty. Its duration was therefore reduced to ten years, and afterwards became annual. That less umbrage might be given by a divided authority, nine archons were chosen; and the chief of the nine was called *the Archon*, and gave his name to the current year.

The Archons.

Before Christ, 624. Athens had not as yet any written laws, therefore the decisions of the magistrates depended upon their ideas of what was just or unjust; that is to say, frequently upon caprice; for where rules are wanting, every thing is arbitrary, and the consequent disorders showed the necessity of having fixed laws. Draco, a virtuous archon, about six hundred and twenty-four years before Jesus Christ, seemed worthy of the glorious employment of being a legislator; but he run into an excess of severity. All crimes, without distinction, he punished capitally; saying, that to him even the slightest seemed to deserve death, and he could find no other punishment for the greatest; a most absurd and cruel maxim, which, under a pretence of banishing vice, must annihilate society. Even if inanimate things (such as a statue) had killed a man by accident, he ordered them to be prosecuted, and carried out of the state with execrations, to inspire men with a detestation of murder. These trifling methods, which are not undeserving of ridicule, seem rather to disgrace than to establish legislation. The laws of Draco written in blood, as the Ancients said, destroyed themselves, because they were impracticable.

Draco the legislator.

Divisions among the citizens. This yoke once broken, the Athenians, guided by the natural impulse of their genius, passed from extreme subjection to excessive licentiousness, and every one wished to have the form of government modelled to his own liking and particular interest. The mountaineers, who were poor, wished for a democracy; the rich inhabitants of the plains preferred aristocracy; those on the seacoasts insisted

upon a mixed government, as the best calculated for the general interest. Solon had the glory of gaining the confidence of all parties, and, in this critical juncture, was chosen legislator.

Before Christ, 594. Solon a new legislator.

Solon was eminent by his birth, and had improved his mind by travelling, and more particulary by his progress in philosophy; which, at that time, was employed for the improvement of politics. He was of a studious disposition, an amiable man, and a good citizen, for he even refused royalty; and undoubtedly could have established an excellent body of laws, if he had hearkened only to the dictates of his own reason, and not been misled by national prejudices; but desirous to please all parties, he temporised between them, so as to suffer the seeds of every evil to remain. He said himself, that his laws were the best the Athenians were capable of receiving. If that be the case, Athens was not qualified to admit of a good form of government, and the legislator ought not to be blamed.

The democratical form of government.

The chief power was lodged in the hands of the people, and the magistracy intrusted to the principal members of the state. Nothing could be better judged, provided their authority had been sufficient to prescribe rules to the people, and counterbalance its power, otherwise the want of a perfect equilibrium could not fail to be injurious. Though the citizens, who were rich, or of genteel fortunes, formed three of the orders, and the poor only the fourth, yet the last, by being the most numerous, found, from the arrangement of the legislator, that they were the arbiters in affairs of the greatest con-

sequence; which was giving up the republic to a restless, turbulent, blind populace. In the public assemblies, whether general or particular, every individual had a right to vote on the subjects of peace or war, the finances, or whatever immediately concerned the state. To these meetings, they had a right to appeal from the sentence of the senate; and Solon made his laws obscure, that this right might frequently be used. Thus the laws, which ought to be equally simple and intelligible, since they are the common rule of civil life, became the subject of disputes; and the lowest order of the people carrying it against the other three, became the judges of what they were little capable of determining. We shall frequently see, in the course of their history, that this exposed the republic to the greatest evils.

The common people judges of the laws.

On the other hand, the senate, as established by Solon, consisting of four hundred persons (a hundred of each tribe *) which they afterwards increased to six hundred, was either too numerous to deliberate with prudence, or had not a sufficient ascendancy over the multitude. The common assemblies of the people were held almost every eight days, where every citizen of fifty years of age had the privilege of speaking, so that the talents of a corrupted or seditious orator, might easily overpower the prudence of the senators, who had only a right to propose the business of the meeting; from whence there must have been a perpetual contest between the head and the members; and,

The senate too numerous and too weak.

* Cecrops had divided the people of Athens into four tribes, which must not be confounded with the classes of Solon. The number of tribes was afterwards increased to ten.

of course, dreadful convulsions through the whole body. *I am surprised*, said Anacharsis the Scythian to Solon, *to see, that with you the wise men have only the privilege of consulting, while the fools have the power to determine.* Experience proved that Anacharsis was right.

Solon restores the Areopagus.

The only possible remedy for this inconvenience, was the restoration of the Areopagus, which had been almost annihilated by Draco, who had substituted the tribunal of the *Ephetæ* in its stead. Solon reestablished it with all its ancient dignity, committing to it the inspection of public affairs, and more particularly the education of youth, (a matter so neglected in our days, yet of such infinite consequence); and it was composed solely of the senior Archons. This change could not fail to be of great benefit to the state; but though the Areopagus was highly respected, yet it was not a sufficient barrier against popular commotions. An unbridled multitude, with the whole power in their hands, when hurried on by passion, does not hearken to the lessons of prudence.

Particular laws of Solon.

The particular laws of Solon were superior to his general form of government, and ought to be studied by those who have a desire to be acquainted with the principles of civil society. I shall therefore mention some of them, upon which attention may be employed to advantage. After having abolished all the laws of Draco, except those against murder, he restrained the severity of creditors, and prohibited imprisonment for debt. Montesquieu observes, that this should not be extended to commerce, because the general interest would

be injured. It is added, that he cancelled the debts, more easily to extricate the poor from misery and oppression. To inspire a zeal in favour of all the members of the state, he ordained that every citizen might prosecute whoever did an injury to another; and that in all factions and insurrections, where the public peace was broken, every citizen should be obliged to join one party or the other, because the prudent man would certainly take the right side, and be most capable of bringing about an accommodation. He determined that those who had no children, might leave their fortunes to whom they pleased. Till that time, wills were unknown, and the next heir succeeded, so that there was at least the advantage of the fortune remaining in the family. Any man convicted of living an idle life, after the third accusation, was reckoned infamous; and the Areopagus carefully inquired by what means every person subsisted. He borrowed this law from the Egyptians; and modern nations would do well to profit by it. If a son either foolishly wasted his father's property, or refused to support his parents, he was likewise declared infamous: But if they had not bred him to some business, he was neither obliged to maintain them, nor subjected to the penalties of this law. By this means, both the father and the children were concerned to fulfil the views of nature and of society. Women brought no fortune to their husbands but three gowns, and some moveables of little value. Portions, which were less necessary in republics, might make a kind of dangerous traffic of marriage, and likewise tear in pieces a family fortune. A ci-

tizen who kept company with dissolute women, was excluded from speaking in the assemblies of the people, because, by his manners, he had rendered himself unworthy of their confidence.

An Archon guilty of drunkenness, was to be put to death; so essential a virtue is temperance in a magistrate. Children, whose fathers were killed in the service of their country, were to be educated at the public expense, till the age of twenty-one. This was an effectual means of encouraging and supporting valour, as infamy was a most useful punishment for cowardice. Pisistratus, some time after, ordered that soldiers maimed in war should be supported at the expense of the republic.

Law concerning accusers.

Any person accusing another who had not a fifth part of the votes in his favour, was obliged to pay a heavy fine. 'Solon,' says the celebrated Montesquieu, 'knew how to prevent 'the abuse which the people might make of the 'right of judging crimes; and therefore the A-'reopagus had a power of revising their sen-'tences, that in case that tribunal thought 'the person accused was unjustly acquitted, he 'might be brought again to his trial before the 'people; or, if he was unjustly condemned, the 'execution of the sentence might be stopped 'till the affair was reexamined; an excellent 'law, which subjected the people to the cen-'sure of the power which they most respected, 'and, indeed, even to their own.'* Wherefore then so many instances of enormous injustice in Athens?

The ostracism.

The ostracism is very well known, by which

* Esprit de Loix, l. 6. ch. 5.

the most illustrious men of the republic, upon being suspected, were banished for ten years. It was not intended as a disgraceful punishment, but by way of precaution, to dispel the jealousy of the people. Six thousand votes were needful to carry it against the person prosecuted. The number of citizens not exceeding twenty thousand, an irreproachable character seemed to be in safety; however, ingratitude, envy, and cabal, sometimes triumphed even over virtue. The date and the author of this political institution are unknown, some ascribing it to Theseus, while others say that it was posterior to Solon. The ostracism, known by other names, prevailed in several democracies; but as it was not restrained by good laws, it could only be productive of mischief.

Sumptuary laws, and exclusion of foreigners.

Without dwelling too long upon particulars, it is proper to observe, that the Athenian legislator limited the expenses of the women, those of burials and religious ceremonies; objects which are of more or less consequence to the public, according to the nature and wealth of the state. Foreigners were permitted to reside in Athens, but excluded from having any share in the government; and a law was passed, making it capital for them to intrude into the assemblies of the people.

Thoughts of Anacharsis and Solon on laws.

It is certain that Solon, however well he might be acquainted with the true principles, did not attain the great purpose of legislation, the peace and happiness of the people. We may judge by the following anecdote. Anacharsis, speaking to him one day of the uselessness of laws, compared them to cobwebs, in which the feeble and weak are catched, but which are broken through

by the rich and powerful. *Men keep their agreements*, replied Solon, *when they have no inducement to violate them; and this is exactly the case with regard to my laws. I accommodate them so to the interest of the people, that all will be sensible it is much better to observe than to infringe them.* Can any more proper means be contrived, either in morals or politics, to attach people to a sense of their duty, than convincing them that it is their interest? And must they not find it so in a good government, where every thing tends to the public happiness, and the advantage of individuals is always united with the good of the community? If the effects then did not correspond with the expectations of the legislator, it is because the mode of government and the laws which he established, were not accommodated to the true interest of the Athenians. Anacharsis was mistaken in supposing that one part of the body politic must always be exempt from the laws; and perhaps Solon was wrong in not giving his sufficient strength to restrain the multitude: but it must be allowed, that it was too difficult an undertaking to govern such an untractable people as the Athenians. Who knows but their new laws were the very best which they would consent to receive?

The disgust of Solon.

Before the death of the legislator, that fickle people gave vent to their national character, by proposing to him every day to make some alterations. He was so disgusted that he quitted his native country, and they allowed him to remain absent for ten years. He improved his knowledge during his travels, while the people at home were preparing for a new revolution, and, at his return, he found the evil incurable,

Ambition of Pisistratus.

Pisistratus, who was his relation, rich, generous, popular, skilled in the art of dazzling the citizens by his splendid talents, and of gaining them by deceitful caresses, secretly aimed at obtaining the sovereign power. Solon, who saw into his purposes, said to him, *Were it not for your ambition, you are the best of the Athenians.* It is not uncommon to see virtues changed into vices by this passion; and Pisistratus forfeited his honour, that he might rise to power. He wounded himself one day with his own hand, and running into the streets covered with blood, implored the protection of the people, whose enemies, he pretended, had made an attempt upon his life. One of his accomplices immediately proposed that a guard should be appointed to protect the person of so valuable a citizen; and when granted, it was employed by Pisistratus to take possession of the citadel, and establish his authority.

The death of Solon.

Solon fruitlessly attempted to revive in the minds of the people a love of liberty; and when the usurper one day sent to know what had inspired him with such rashness, he boldly replied, *My old age.* And at last, not being able to endure such a melancholy prospect, he bid an eternal adieu to Athens, and died at a very advanced age. All posterity has been loud in his praises; and the noble desire of seeking instruction attended him to the last. *I grow old,* said he, *learning many things.* Some verses of gallantry, which he composed in his youth, could not injure his character. His many virtues, and constant labour for the public good, justly secured him the reputation of wisdom.

A tyrant (the ancients gave that name to every usurper, and frequently to their lawful kings) could not live unmolested, especially in such a turbulent city as Athens. Notwithstanding the abilities and pleasing manners of Pisistratus, he was very soon obliged to betake himself to flight; but was restored by Megacles, one of the chief conspirators, upon condition of marrying his daughter. According to Herodotus, a woman dressed like Minerva, accompanied Pisistratus in a chariot, and made the people receive him as if he had been brought back by the goddess herself. Popular superstition supplied impostors with extraordinary resources; but, however, the factions revived, and Pisistratus was obliged once more to retire; yet, after having remained eleven years in exile, he recovered his power by a stratagem. Pisistratus expelled, and again established.

After this, he adopted a better system of government; instead of bringing the inhabitants of the country into the city, as was done by the famous Theseus, he prudently obliged them to attend to the cares of agriculture; and certainly great advantages were gained, whether effected by persuasion or authority. The market-place was no longer filled with people ready to engage in cabals; turbulent men were employed in agriculture, which diverted them from every other object, and made them more attentive to the produce of their own labour, than to the affairs of government; they cleared waste lands, and improved others. Pisistratus made them pay a tenth for the support of the state, to which they did not consent without murmuring; but the severity of the tax was To prevent cabals, he employed the people in agriculture.

softened by his humanity, and the sweets of peace were enjoyed by the improvers of the country. As another means of making the people tractable, he encouraged the arts and sciences. He made the Athenians acquainted with the poetry of Homer, erected some magnificent buildings, and laid the foundation of the temple of Jupiter Olympius. In one word, he instructed princes in the art of governing; and, though an usurper, he reconciled the people to a yoke which seemed to secure the public happiness.

He encouraged arts and sciences.

Before Christ, 514. Children of Pisistratus.

His two sons, Hipparchus and Hippias, shared the sovereign authority. The first possessed all the good qualities of the father, but was assassinated by Aristogiton and Harmodius, who were his personal enemies; the other was naturally of a mild temper, but, being provoked by the murder of his brother, and seeing the danger to which his own person was exposed, indulged himself in an excess of severity which rendered him odious. When Aristogiton was put to torture, instead of his accomplices, he named several of the friends of Hippias, who were instantly put to death; and then concluded by telling the tyrant, in an insulting manner, *I now know none but yourself deserving of death.* A woman, whose name was Leæna, was exposed to the same torture. Dreading lest the pain should extort such a confession from her as was wanted, she bit off her tongue. This striking incident revived the national spirit; the tyrant was obliged to fly, and the popular government was restored. We shall see the Roman liberty springing from a cause nearly similar.

Popular government restored.

Sparta had assisted the Athenians against the sons of Pisistratus, but soon took up arms to give them new masters, and even to restore Hippias. Such conduct was inconsistent with that virtue which has been so greatly celebrated; but a desire of presiding in the affairs of Greece was the great failing of the Spartans. They began to be jealous of the power of Athens; they were afraid that liberty would increase both its strength and reputation; and they did not choose to have any rivals. We shall see even the rivalship of those states become fatal. Before we take a view of these two republics, contending against the powers of Asia, let us reflect one moment upon the difference of their character, and the progress of the human mind among the Greeks.

Sparta opposed the Athenians when fighting for liberty.

Lycurgus and Solon having followed quite different systems, either because their ideas were not the same, or the genius of the people was not suited to receive the same kind of laws. Sparta and Athens formed a very extraordinary contrast. The one was devoted entirely to war, and no citizen could have any other object to engage his attention, nor choose any other employment; he must therefore either prove a hero, or renounce his country. The other received all the arts, and every kind of learning. Every Athenian was obliged to be a soldier in cases of necessity; but he might also be whatever he pleased, provided he was engaged in some employment. There, a rigorous poverty destroyed the springs of avarice and self-interest, and chained up every passion but those which prompted to glory, or promoting the good of the state. Here, the prospect of

Parallel between Sparta and Athens.

wealth encouraged industry, commerce, and genius; and the heart was equally engaged in advancing public and private interest. There, the habit of implicit obedience was contracted from the cradle, and continued through life; and the generals or magistrates needed only to give the signal to have their purposes immediately executed. Here, they endured subjection and restraint with impatience; loved licentiousness under the name of liberty, giving themselves up to their unbridled fancy, and often insulted the laws and magistrates, because their power was too weak to prevent their becoming the sport of a popular assembly.

The effect of manners in government.

The excessive austerity of the Spartans, which, from education, became a second nature, confirmed a government, founded upon the manners; and the strength of government, in its turn, supported that against the propensities of human nature. The Athenian manners, softened by a relish for pleasures, and wavering from a want of established principles, could not be amended by a bad plan of government, and therefore could not fail to increase the mischief. We shall see the haughty, inflexible, and imperious Spartan always anxious to command, often become cruel and unjust in following a regular system of politics: the Athenians, valiant, brave, ingenious, industrious, gentle, and polite, but vain, trifling, and inconstant, will distinguish themselves by glorious actions and noble works, amidst an infinite number of faults, which will bring on the ruin of the state. This parallel will help to explain the events.

The manner in which these two states treated their slaves, sufficiently displays the difference of their character. In comparison of the Helotes, the Athenian slaves were the happiest of mankind. In case of grievances, they had a right to apply to justice for redress against their masters. They were allowed to purchase land, and to redeem themselves, when they had amassed a sufficient sum for that purpose; they were often made free, as a recompense for their services, or from pure generosity; and then they made choice of patrons who protected their interests. As much as the Helotes justly detested the Spartans, so much ought the Athenian slaves to have been attached to their masters, if it were possible to inspire a love for slavery.

The Athenians humane to their slaves.

This humanity, which extended even to the brutes, certainly proceeded in a great measure from the cultivation of the mind. A taste for learning, which contributes so much to soften the manners, had already begun to be displayed in Attica. In the time of Solon, the drama was invented by Thespis; and though the legislator upbraided him with having uttered falsehoods in public, the dramatic art, properly directed, might prove equally a source of pleasure and instruction. Pisistratus enriched Athens with a public library; and his son Hipparchus entertained the poet Simonides at his court, to which he likewise invited Anacreon, whose verses still delight the world by their elegant simplicity. Archilochus, Stesichorus, Alceus, and Sappho, had already brought lyric poetry into vogue. The ancient Greek colonies boasted that theirs was the country of ce-

Learning began to flourish.

lebrated writers. Nothing is so favourable for genius as peace and happiness, which they for a long time enjoyed.

Philosophy at first was confined to morals and politics.

Where the rays of literature and taste exert their influence on genius, they produce the happiest effects. New ideas spring up in crowds; the true and the beautiful are sought after; men, seeking instruction, find it necessary to study; and philosophy begins to dawn. Happily it was first directed to the most essential objects, morals and politics. It was natural that studious people, in a land of liberty, should at first employ themselves in whatever could contribute to the happiness of mankind, or the good of the state.

Conversation of ancient sages.

Plutarch mentions a conversation of ancient sages, disputing upon the following question, What is the most perfect kind of popular government? To which they made the following answers. Solon said, It was that *where an injury done to an individual was felt by the whole.* Bias, *where the law reigned instead of a monarch.* Thales, *where the inhabitants are neither too rich nor too poor.* Anacharsis, *where virtue is honoured, and vice detested.* Pittacus, *where dignities are conferred only upon the deserving, and never upon the wicked.* Cleobulus, *where the people are more afraid of censure than the law.* Chilo, *where the laws, and not orators, are hearkened to, and have influence.* Periander, tyrant of Corinth, whose guests they were, concluded in favour of that popular government which approaches the nearest to aristocracy, where a few virtuous men hold the reins. Though this conversation is probably fictitious, it shows us upon what subjects the philosophers employed their minds before they became sophists.

However, Thales of Miletus in Ionia, who is placed at the head of the seven Grecian sages, distinguished himself likewise by his speculative philosophy, which we shall have occasion to mention in another place. He was an astronomer; but was excelled by Solon in that science, which was little known to the Greeks. Thales divided the year into twelve months of thirty days, and, perceiving his mistake, corrected it by another error; for he intercalated a whole month at the end of every second year. Solon improved the year of Thales, by making it purely a lunar year of three hundred and fifty-four days, and intercalated twenty-three days at the end of every second year, to make it square with the true year. This was making a great advance in Greece, since they were even unacquainted with the division of the week into seven days. The Egyptians and the Phenicians had been infinitely more learned for a number of ages.

Astronomy. Division of the year by Thales and by Solon.

At this time the fine arts had begun to be perfected. The two first orders of architecture, the Doric and the Ionic, had been invented; and the genius of that time seemed to pave the way for the ages of Pericles and Philip. Corinth set the example of maritime commerce, and united wealth and splendour to liberty. In a word, Greece arrived at the period of bright and solid glory, which at first was the produce of war and patriotism, but in the end was the effect of genius universally exercised.

Architecture. Commerce.

SECOND EPOCH.

FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR AGAINST THE PERSIANS, TILL THE GOVERNMENT OF PERICLES.

CHAPTER I.

BEGINNING OF THE WAR AGAINST THE PERSIANS. MILTIADES VICTORIOUS AT MARATHON.

General idea of the war carried on against the Persians.

THOUGH war be in itself dreadful, as it presents nothing to our view but men killed by men, and ruins covered with human blood, it becomes a source of noble and surprising actions, when undertaken or carried on for self-defence, by citizens who unite discipline and military skill to the most heroic courage. To meet the greatest dangers, to despise death, to make up for the want of numbers by dint of genius and bravery, to improve the smallest advantages, to repair the greatest misfortunes, to overcome enemies who think themselves almost certain of victory, to save the lives and liberties of the people, to deserve acknowledgments and immortal renown for important services, will, in some degree, deface those horrors which are inseparable from every bloody enterprise. The war between the Greeks and Persians, from the greatness of the object, will be found particularly interesting.

We left the great empire of Cyrus in possession of Darius, son of Hystaspes, whose ambition, confined within too narrow limits in Asia, made him thirst after new conquests. A desire of revenge, added to this insatiable passion, inspired him with the scheme of subduing Greece. The Ionians having rebelled against him, applied for protection to the Greeks in Europe. Cleomenes, king of Sparta, protector of the tyrant Hippias, that had been driven out of Athens, refused to assist the Ionians; but the more generous Athenians granted them twenty ships. Athens was provoked against the Persians, who had received Hippias into their country with a design of restoring him; and at that time the enthusiasm of liberty was in the greatest fermentation. The people, who had languished under the sons of Pisistratus, from the moment of their bursting these chains, began to be animated with the most heroic spirit.

Cause of the war.

Before Christ, 501.

Athens declares for the Ionians against Darius.

The Ionians thought they had gained their liberty, upon their marching into Lydia, and destroying Sardis. But Darius was very soon revenged by the destruction of Miletus, when he forced Ionia and the neighbouring islands to return to their obedience. He then sent heralds into Greece to demand earth and water, that is to say, an acknowledgment of his sovereignty. In their indignation, the Spartans put to death two of the heralds, whose persons the law of nations ought to have rendered sacred; but several cities submitted, particularly Egina, situated near Athens, in the Ægean sea. The Athenians complained of this cowardice to the Spartans, who presided in the Grecian confederacy; and the chief of the Eginetæ were

Darius attempts to subdue Greece.

seized as traitors to their country. It was a great happiness for Greece, that a crowd of little states, all animated with the spirit of freedom, and totally independent on one another, were so united by treaties and reciprocal obligations, that their common interest had the force of a law, and that a kind of general tribunal was authorized to punish domestic treachery and foreign invasion. Without such an advantage, they must have soon submitted to the yoke.

The Persians enter Attica.

Darius sent an army by land, and likewise a fleet, to execute his project. His fleet was wrecked in doubling Cape Athos, called at present *Capo Santo;* and the Thracians attacked and dispersed his army in the night, which was commanded by Mardonius, an inexperienced young nobleman. A greater army, under better generals, came pouring in upon Attica, after having plundered Eretria, in the Isle of Eubea. Athens being in danger, applied to the confederates for the necessary aid; and Sparta promised to grant it, but declared that they must wait a few days, because the religious custom prevented them from taking the field before the full moon; a superstition most unworthy of that wise and warlike republic. The other states were struck dumb with consternation, except Platea, which sent them a thousand fighting men; so that they were obliged, for the first time, to arm their slaves.

Athenian army under ten generals.

The Athenian army consisted only of ten thousand men, and the Persians had more than a hundred thousand. * This great inequality may

* Rollin makes their army a hundred thousand foot, and ten thousand horse; after having said, in the preceding page, that they were five

be looked upon as a less evil than the appointment of ten generals, named by the ten tribes, who were to have the command every day alternately. How could it be expected that they should follow one uniform plan; that the whole should act in concert; or that the incapacity of one should not render the superior abilities of another totally useless? The imprudence of the Athenians was evident in this absurd practice, which a mistaken zeal for liberty had established. Happily for them, Miltiades was one of their generals, and his colleagues had a sincere regard for their country, which was the preservation of Athens.

Miltiades proposes to attack the enemy.

It was necessary to determine whether they should attack the enemy, or wait for them within the walls of the city; and the last measure seeming to be the most secure, carried the greatest number of votes. But Miltiades ventured to insist upon the first, as necessary, in their situation, where a vigorous effort was wanted. The virtuous Aristides, who was one of the generals, supported the opinion of Miltiades, and prevailed; and being convinced that one chief was needful for the execution, when his day of command came, generously resigned it to that great man, and all the rest followed his example.

Before Christ, 490. Battle of Marathon.

The battle of Marathon was the triumph of patriotism. The military art, which was but little known before that time, completely seconded Athenian valour. Miltiades drew up

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hundred thousand. Justin makes them six hundred thousand. Cornelius Nepos, with more probability, supposes them only ten times the number of the Athenians. Whom shall we believe?

his army at the foot of a mountain, covering both flanks, that he might not be surrounded; and, to secure the greatest resources, he placed his principal strength in the wings. The Greeks rushed on to the engagement, and the enemy were thrown into disorder by that unexpected impetuosity. The two wings having routed those of the Persians, poured in upon the main body of their army, which could no longer resist, and the whole were put to flight. Hippias was slain in the battle, at a time when he undoubtedly flattered himself that he would reduce his country to slavery.

Shameful flight of the Persians.

This great army, which Darius had ordered to send to him all the Athenians in chains, and which had brought marble on purpose to erect trophies, fled with the greatest precipitation to the ships, seven of which were taken, and many of the rest burnt by the conquerors. The Spartans arrived next day, after a forced march of three days. They would have reckoned the delay a crime, if superstition had not imposed it upon them as a duty.

Glory, the reward of the conquerors.

Glory was then the reward of great men, and sufficient for republican virtue. Monuments were erected in honour of the slain. A painting was made of the battle of Marathon; and all the favour which was shown to Miltiades, was to represent him in the picture at the head of his colleagues.

Injustice of the Athenians to Miltiades.

Who could suspect that the preserver of his country should become a victim of ingratitude? But the Athenians were always so distrustful, that the least suspicion made them forget the greatest services. Miltiades having required a fleet, in order to punish the people

of the islands who had betrayed the common interest, attacked Paros; but, after a long siege, in which he was wounded, he miscarried in the enterprize, and returned to Athens. Whether, as Herodotus says, personal hatred prompted him to this undertaking, or that the people could not reproach him with any fault but his misfortune, is uncertain; he was most unjustly treated as a criminal. He was accused, and condemned to pay a fine of fifty talents,* a sum equal to the expense of the fleet. Not being in a situation to discharge such a fine, the hero, who had refused the sovereign power in Chersonesus, that he might devote his service to his country, died in prison. He left behind him a son worthy of himself, the illustrious Cimon, who afterwards signalized himself by his talents and his virtues.

CHAPTER II.

THE RISE OF ARISTIDES AND THEMISTOCLES. THE INVASION OF GREECE BY XERXES.

Aristides and Themistocles.

After the death of Miltiades, two other illustrious citizens, Aristides and Themistocles, had the greatest influence in conducting the public affairs. A difference of character and principles occasioned a remarkable disagreement between them from their earliest years. Aristides, of an austere and irreproachable virtue, detested whatever was not perfectly con-

* L.9670, if with Budæus we value the Mina at 3*l.* 4*s.* 7*d.*; or 9300*l.* if we adopt the calculation of Agricola, who makes the Mina only equal to 3*l.* 2*s.*

sistent with the strictest justice, and very well deserved the application of the following verse of Æschylus, which was made to him by the whole audience at the theatre, *His desire is to be truly just, not to appear so;* the encomium of consumate virtue. Themistocles, full of fire, boldness, and ambition, was not at all scrupulous about the means, provided he could secure success, making his principles easily bend to times and circumstances. Less anxious to deserve, than to procure, admirers and associates, he could not fail, with such uncommon abilities (as his preceptor had foretold), either to do a great deal of good, or great harm, to his country.

Their system of politics different.

Athens had always been a theatre of political disputes. When the system of government in a free state is bad, parties differ on its fundamentals. Aristides having imbibed the maxims of Lycurgus, who laid the people under necessary restraint, was inclined to aristocracy. Themistocles, whose interest it was to flatter the people, declared for democracy; and the surname *Just*, which was universally given to his rival, did not in the least wound his pride, because he foresaw that this honourable appellation could not be pleasing, even to those who bestowed it, and that it would become a motive for hatred and jealousy.

Themistocles renders Aristides suspected.

To get rid of such a rival, whom he always found differing in opinion from him, he employed even the title, which was an evidence of superior virtue, as a mean of accomplishing his purpose, by representing Aristides as a sovereign judge in all cases; as a monarch whose word was a law, without having occasion for

the trappings of royalty. His emissaries filled the minds of the people with suspicions, till they at last insisted on the ostracism. It was a custom to write the name of the person they desired to have banished upon a shell, ὀστρακον. A peasant who could not write, and was unacquainted with the person of Aristides, presented him with a shell, desiring him to write the name of Aristides upon it. *What injury has this man done to you?* said this virtuous citizen. *None at all,* replied the peasant, *but I am tired of hearing him incessantly called the* JUST. Upon which Aristides wrote his own name. There were at least six thousand votes against him, for that number was required by the law; and he received his sentence with resignation, saying, at setting out upon his exile, *I pray the gods may not suffer the Athenians to have cause to remember Aristides.*

Foresight in Themistocles.

After such an unworthy action, Themistocles must have been loaded with reproach to the latest posterity, if he had not soon after done such noble services to his country. Nobody had more extensive views in either war or politics, and no man was more proper for putting them in execution. Far from being lulled into security, like the rest of the Athenians, who thought that the victory gained at Marathon delivered them from all danger, he looked upon the war with the Persians as scarce begun, and did not doubt but it would continue to rage with fury. He reflected upon the weakness and the resources of Athens; and observing, that though they were advantageously situated for having a fleet, yet they were inferior in that respect to their neighbours the

Eginetæ; and being convinced that nothing but a strong naval force could preserve the state, increase their wealth, or advance their power, he attached himself chiefly to this object, and persuaded the Athenians to dedicate the produce of their silver mines, which was usually shared equally among the people, to the purpose of fitting out a fleet. From this fund they built a hundred galleys, which proved the bulwark of the republic.

Attempt of Xerxes against Greece.

If it had not been for this precaution, and these measures, Greece must have been infallibly destroyed. Darius was preparing to invade the country, with all the power of Asia, when he was taken ill, and died; but his son Xerxes, inheriting his father's resentment, and adding to it all the heat of a haughty impetuous youth, * after having made immense preparations, sent to demand *earth and water*. Themistocles, to animate his country still more, by depriving them of every hope of accommodation, for it was necessary either to preserve their liberty, or to be buried with it, put to death the interpreter who explained the king of Persia's declaration; and by this proceeding, laid them under the necessity of being invincible.

Prodigious army of Xerxes.

Xerxes, in the mean time, at the head of an innumerable army, which Herodotus, and Rollin after him, make to amount to five millions, two hundred thousand men, including the sea-

* Xerxes was a son of a second marriage, by the Princess Atossa, daughter of Cyrus, whom Darius married when he was upon the throne. Darius preferred him before his children of the first marriage, and appointed him his successor, as the eldest son of the *King*, though not the eldest son of *Darius*. A Spartan, suggested this distinction, saying, it was the custom in Sparta.

men, and all the followers of the army, came in triumph to crush a petty nation, which he despised. Diodorus Siculus, as well as Pliny, Ælian, and many other writers, lessen the number of the army greatly. Though Herodotus's calculation is evidently absurd, some people say that he deserves the greatest credit, because he lived at the time of this expedition; but we need only attend to his narration, the speeches, the dreams, and the circumstances which he adapts to them, to distrust his evidence. He seems rather to have imitated Homer, than to have written like an historian. He represents Xerxes, at one time as a philosopher, melting into tears at the sight of this immense multitude, of whom not one would be found existing in a hundred years; at another time, as a furious madman, ordering the sea to be scourged, because a tempest had broken the bridge of boats over which his troops were to have passed the Hellespont (at present the Dardanelles), and all the workmen to be punished, as if they could have chained the winds and waves. Herodotus says, that Xerxes opened a passage for his fleet through mount Athos; but modern travellers deny that such a work was ever performed.

Just cause for distrusting the Greeks.

Is it not amazing how Grecian fables could impose upon so many valuable writers? By copying them, history is deprived of probability, and critical inquiry becomes useless. Must we look upon the Persians as barbarians, because the Greeks called them so? Is it not well known, that they were a civilized and flourishing nation, at the time when Greece was immersed in a state of horrid barbarity?

Grecian vanity, which well deserves to be proverbial, should make us attentive how we give credit to their details, and the more so, as we can derive very little benefit from them.

Demaratus King of Sparta fled to Persia for refuge.

Demaratus, one of the kings of Lacedemon, had been for some time banished, because, in his country, as he said himself, *the law was more powerful than the kings.* He sought an asylum in Persia, and was received there with particular respect. Xerxes having reviewed his troops, asked him if the Greeks durst wait his approach; to which he frankly replied, especially with regard to the Spartans, that the love of liberty would make them lend a deaf ear to every proposal; and though they were reduced to but a handful of men, they would not decline the combat. *They are free*, added he, *but they pay an implicit obedience to the law; and that law commands them to conquer or die;* and the event verified his assertion. The subsequent narration will now show what liberty is capable of executing against despotic power.

Sparta and Athens prepare for war.

The Spartans and Athenians having been informed by Demaratus himself of the invasion with which they were threatened, endeavoured to animate all the Grecian states to take up arms for the general cause; but fear in some, and a jealousy of the command in others, detached almost all the allies from the confederacy; yet they were not less disposed to make a vigorous defence. The Athenians made haste to choose their general. An arrogant avaricious orator, whose name was Epicydes, set himself up as the rival of Themistocles; and as the people are always easily deceived, he was upon the point of being preferred, when

Themistocles appointed general.

Themistocles, knowing his weak side, loaded him with presents, and prevailed with him to desist, and thus got himself appointed to the command. The public good required it. In such situations, a man of superior abilities, without transgressing the bounds of modesty, may do himself justice, and employ all his influence to procure an employment, where honour is surrounded with danger.

Though the Athenians had fitted out two-thirds of the fleet, the Spartans contended with them for the right of commanding; and all the allies having declared in their favour, Eurybiades, who by no means deserved it, was chosen admiral. Themistocles, from the dread of a rupture, consented, and told the Athenians, that they should not hesitate to yield that honour to the Spartans, provided they did their duty. He had given a remarkable proof of his moderation before this, by supporting a decree for recalling those that were in exile, particularly Aristides. The union of these two illustrious rivals in the necessities of the state, is one of the most affecting lessons which can be given to patriotism; and we shall see its effects by what follows.

Eurybiades chosen admiral of the fleet.

At last Xerxes arrived at Thermopylæ, a very narrow passage, where he was met by four thousand men, under the command of Leonidas king of Sparta. The Persian monarch having fruitlessly attempted to corrupt him, wrote to him in the style of a master, commanding him to lay down his arms; to which Leonidas replied like a Spartan, *Come and take them.* The enemy were repulsed, notwithstanding their prodigious numbers; but unfortunate-

Before Christ, 480.

Battle of Thermopylæ.

ly they discovered a path, by which they gained the summit without being perceived, so that the post could be no longer defended. Leonidas, with three hundred Spartans, after having obliged the rest of the Greeks to retire, did not desist from attacking the Persians, devoting himself to certain death, either for the honour of his country, or to intimidate the enemy by a prodigy of valour. All these heroes fell in the field, except one who brought the news, and who was treated as an infamous deserter in Sparta, till he gloriously wiped out the disgrace the first opportunity. The Amphyctions fixed up the following inscription at Thermopylæ some time after, which is admirable for its simplicity. *Passenger, declare at Lacedemon, that we died here in obedience to its laws.*

The Greeks celebrated the Olympic games notwithstanding their danger.

The passage of Thermopylæ cost Xerxes twenty thousand men, a small loss for such a numerous army, without supposing, as some credulous historians have done, that it amounted to three millions of fighting men, or even a quarter of that number; for it seemed that his opponents, who had only eleven thousand two hundred men, could not possibly escape utter destruction. He continued his march, marking his way with fire and desolation; and inquiring how the Greeks were employed, was told they were celebrating the Olympic games, of which he received some account, particularly that a simple olive crown was the prize so eagerly contended for; upon which, one of his satraps exclaimed, *What, men to contend only for honour!*

However, Athens was on the brink of destruction. The Peleponnesians forsook them, to fortify themselves behind the Isthmus of Corinth. The oracle had declared, that Athens could find no safety *but in walls of wood*. This oracle, probably inspired by Themistocles, enabled him to lead the people where he pleased; and finding, that the city could not be defended against such a deluge of enemies, and that the sea was their only asylum, he persuaded them that their ships were the walls of wood meant by the oracle, and that the gods themselves commanded them to embark. As religion attached the Athenians to their homes, to their burying places, and their temples, a higher motive of the same kind was necessary to make them withdraw from the city. He, with great difficulty, obtained a decree, declaring that Athens should be committed to the protection of Minerva, and that all the citizens capable of serving, should go on board the ships, every one taking proper measures for the safety of his family.

Athens has no resource left but in its fleet.

They parted, shedding floods of tears; and the citizens of Trœzenæ in Argolis generously received the women, children, and old men, and provided for their subsistence. Some of the citizens being obstinately resolved to remain, shut themselves up in the citadel, whose walls being of wood, seemed to them as intended by the oracle, and they defended it till they were all killed. Xerxes burnt this fortification, and enjoyed the pleasure of revenge, without being able to foresee the impending revolution.

Xerxes takes Athens.

CHAPTER III.

THE BATTLES OF SALAMIS, PLATEA, AND MYCALE. THE FINAL EXPULSION OF THE PERSIANS FROM GREECE.

Dispute between Themistocles and Eurybiades.

A FIRST naval engagement, which was fought near Artemisium, though not decisive, yet was of great advantage to the Greeks, by instructing them in the management of their ships, and convincing them that they could oppose the enemy, notwithstanding the superiority of his fleet. They again rendezvoused in the Straits of Salamis, where a council was held to decide on their future motions. Eurybiades, and a majority of the council, were for gaining the Gulf of Corinth, that they might be ready to defend Peloponnesus. Themistocles insisted, that it would be an unpardonable fault to quit the Strait, where the Persian fleet had not room to act. *Strike, but hearken!* said he to Eurybiades, who, in the heat of the dispute, had threatened him with a blow. This expression had such an effect upon the Spartan, that from that moment he gave himself up to the direction of Themistocles. Happily, that false honour which barbarians have introduced amongst us, was unknown to them; they knew how to despise an injury, or to revenge it gloriously.

The presumption of Xerxes.

If Xerxes had followed the advice of Artemisia Queen of Halicarnassus, an heroic woman who accompanied him, he would have avoided a hazardous battle, and, by advancing

slowly must have destroyed the Greeks, without being exposed to suffer; but his pride made him deaf to reason, as he thought it was not possible for the enemy to make any resistance. Themistocles, on purpose to draw him into a snare, caused him to be privately informed that the Greeks were going to retreat from Salamis, and by that means he would lose the opportunity of ruining their fleet at one blow. This advice determined him; and he immediately gave orders to engage, while he placed himself upon an eminence, that his presence might animate his troops. A great prince would have animated them by his example.

Aristides and Themistocles unite in defence of their country.

It was at this time that Aristides, like a true citizen, came from his command at Egina to join Themistocles, no personal enmity being able to cool his zeal for his country. After having invited him to put an end to their differences, he offered to serve under him, and to assist in his councils. Themistocles was too great a man not to be sensible of the value of such offers, and from that moment a mutual confidence took place; an infallible presage of success.

Battle of Salamis.

The battle of Salamis, like that of Marathon, showed that an excellent general is alone almost equivalent to an army; and Themistocles, without having the title, yet discharged the duties. He knew how to take the advantage of the wind, and drew up the fleet in excellent order. The Persian ships were heavy, and too numerous to act in such a narrow strait, so that they run into confusion, and could not resist the Greeks, who, with less than four hundred sail, dispersed a naval armament, said to have

consisted of more than two thousand. The courage of Queen Artemisia gave room for saying, that the women showed themselves men, and the men behaved like women. The great king shamefully fled, upon a false alarm being artfully conveyed to him by Themistocles, that the Greeks designed to break his bridge of boats; and he hastily repassed into Asia, leaving Mardonius with three hundred thousand men, according to the Greek historians, to repair the disaster.

Mardonius attempts to seduce the Athenians.

Mardonius, though naturally indiscreet and arrogant, had learned that victory does not depend on numbers. He thought that it would be a more certain means of accomplishing his purpose, if he could divide the Greeks, and therefore sent the King of Macedonia to the Athenians, with very advantageous proposals, even offering to give them the command of all Greece, if they would withdraw from the allies. Aristides was at that time principal archon, upon whose heart no offers could make the least impression. He therefore answered, in the presence of the Spartan ambassadors, that all the wealth, and all the promises in the world, should not corrupt the virtue of the Athenians; that they would ever remain mortal enemies of the Persians, and eternally revenge upon them the evils which their country had suffered. He caused the severest curses to be denounced against whoever should propose such an alliance, or betray the national confederacy; sentiments which were so deeply engraven on the hearts of the people, that an Athenian was instantly stoned for giving it as his opinion, that they should give audience to a second deputy from

The answer of Aristides.

Mardonius, while the women in a rage stoned his wife and children as criminals. Upon this occasion the law of nations prevailed over the civil law, for the deputy was dismissed without suffering any insult.

The Spartans send an army.

To support such proceedings, it was absolutely necessary that they should show a resolution proof against all the calamities of war. Mardonius wreaked his vengeance upon Athens, and destroyed it entirely, the inhabitants having as formerly retired to Salamis. The Spartans were not anxious to assist them, as they reserved their forces for the defence of Peloponnesus; but at last, being struck with the reproaches of their allies, they sent five thousand citizens, each of them attended by seven Helotes. The Grecian army was then at least sixty-six thousand strong, among whom were reckoned only eight thousand Athenians. These were sufficient against a bad general and an undisciplined multitude. Pausanias, tutor to one of the kings of Sparta, had the command, and Aristides was at the head of the Athenians.

Before Christ, 479. Battle of Platea.

They entered Bœotia, which the enemy preferred to Attica, as it was open and level, and better suited for the motions of large armies. Notwithstanding the representations of one of his best officers, Mardonius, dreading the want of provisions, yielded to the natural impetuosity of his temper, and was resolved to engage. A contempt of good counsels generally leads to destruction; and the battle of Platea, proved no less fatal to the Persians than the battle of Salamis. Their imprudent general was killed; a body of forty thousand saved themselves by a speedy flight; and almost all the rest were cut

in pieces. After this defeat, the Persians never more returned to Europe.

The moderation of Pausanias.

One of the Eginetæ proposing to Pausanias to revenge the insult which was offered to the body of Leonidas upon that of Mardonius, he nobly replied, They are little acquainted with true glory who desire to imitate Barbarians. Sparta glories in her moderation, and not in mean revenge; besides, the Spartans are sufficiently avenged by the death of so many thousand Persians. A few days after the battle, on purpose to give an affecting lesson to his officers, he caused a feast to be prepared with all the luxury of Asia, and, at the same time, a small repast suited to Spartan frugality. The contrast was striking. *What an egregious folly*, cried he, *for Mardonius, who was accustomed to live so deliciously, to come and attack men who can forego every superfluity!* However, even the manners of this general were corrupted by the plunder which was taken at Platea.

The Spartans and Athenians dispute the prize of valour.

Emulation contributed as much as virtue to the success of the Greeks; and the people of each state contended for the prize of valour, which was solemnly decided. The Spartans and the Athenians disputed with a zeal which might have degenerated into outrage; and the only means which could be found to settle the controversy, was to concur in giving their suffrages in favour of another people. The prize was accordingly adjudged to the Plateans, and Aristides and Pausanias acquiesced in the decision. Heroism must become natural to a nation, when glory is its great incentive. A branch of laurel is sufficient to excite the noblest attempts in a country, where a pecuniary

recompense would be a disgrace to merit. The history of ancient republics frequently presents such objects for our admiration. The victory of Salamis procured to Themistocles the honour of seeing all the people of Greece rise up in his presence at the Olympic games, and look upon him with the highest respect as their deliverer. He confessed that this recompense was even superior to his desires.

Cause of the success of the Greeks in this war.

A noble emulation, a spirit of patriotism, and a love of liberty, strict discipline, and, above all, the abilities of the Grecian generals, compared with the mean slavish disposition of the Persians, the foolish pride, and base cowardice of their master, and the imprudence of his generals, account for the fate of this war. How could millions of combatants, with generals of only indifferent abilities, be baffled by an atom, if we may use the expression? Ought not the number alone to have crushed the Greeks, if there had been a head to have guided the members? Was not Greece, which was divided and filled with traitors, ready to fall an easy prey to the Asiatic monarch? Not only a Xerxes, and a Mardonius, but likewise a Themistocles, and Aristides, and a Pausanias, were necessary to bring about such extraordinary events.

Xerxes defeated likewise in Asia.

The Persians, already conquered in Europe, were as unsuccessful in Asia; for they were defeated in a naval engagement fought at Mycale, on the same day with the battle of Platea. With the assistance of the Ionians, the Greeks completed the destruction of the fleet and army of Xerxes. He fled to Sardis, where he gave orders to burn and destroy all the temples of the

Burns the temples.

Grecian colonies. This order was not dictated by impiety, for the religion of the Persian Magi forbid all temples and idols. Let us here observe the weakness of a base coward, who, not daring to fight with men, revenged his disgrace upon lifeless walls; or who, having foolishly exhausted his treasures, seeks a resource in the plunder of temples, and makes himself execrable in the eyes of those people whom he formerly reckoned among the number of his subjects. All the cities of Ionia immediately joined the general league.

CHAPTER IV.

THE REESTABLISHMENT OF ATHENS. ADMINISTRATION OF ARISTIDES.

Beginning of the divisions between Sparta and Athens.

If the Greeks had been as prudent as they were brave, they would have thought of nothing but how to unite more closely, by confirming the league, of which they had felt the necessity, and upon which their strength depended. A mutual emulation, which tends to cherish the desire of excellence, must be an advantage, if it does not degenerate into detestable jealousy; but that ambition which generally proves fatal to great empires, is likewise the destruction of little states. Elated by their victories, the two rival republics became mortal enemies, and did one another infinitely more mischief than they had received from the Persians. Let us trace the progress and conse-

quences of this dissension, the seeds of which, though at first dormant, soon sprung up, and produced a malignity which prognosticated a civil war.

Sparta opposes the rebuilding of Athens.

As soon as the total defeat of the Persians had dispelled their fears, the Athenians prepared to rebuild and fortify their city; and certainly nothing could be more just or more necessary. But, however, they found an obstruction in the ambitious policy of Sparta, which, looking upon the maritime power and glory, newly acquired by that republic, with a jealous eye, dreaded that the honour of having the command would fall into its hands; and therefore some pretences of the public advantage were found to oppose the views of the Athenians. They pleaded, that the general interest required that no fortification should be suffered out of Peloponnesus, lest the enemy, in case of another invasion, should make it a place of arms. To such unjust policy, Themistocles thought it requisite to oppose artifice. While he amused the Spartans with words and delays, men, women, and children, contended who should be most industrious in rearing the walls of Athens. The Spartans loudly complained; but Themistocles denied the fact, and desired that they would prove it on the spot. They sent deputies, but he privately advised the Athenians to detain them as hostages; and when the whole was completed, he declared that the Athenians had done nothing but employ the common rights of mankind in providing for their safety, by putting the city in a state of defence. That after having rendered such eminent services to Greece, it was an affront to suspect them of any sinister intention;

and that it was unjust in Sparta to desire to establish its own power upon the weakness of its allies; beside, he did not blush to own that he had used deceit, because *every thing is lawful for the good of our country*. The Spartans dissembled, because they could not give vent to their resentment.

Unjust scheme of Themistocles to increase the power of Athens.

Undoubtedly, there are occasions where double-dealing may be employed to oppose superior power and treachery; but the maxim of Themistocles could not justify him for using deceit and injustice. We cease to admire that great man the instant he ceases to respect those laws which ought to be preserved inviolable in the affairs of government, as well as in the conduct of individuals; and here we have an opportunity to judge of his politics. After having rebuilt Athens, his wish was to make it the first city in Greece, and to secure to her that command, of which Sparta had shown too great a jealousy. The building the harbour of Piræus; procuring a decree, which enabled him to add twenty ships to the fleet annually, with extraordinary privileges to encourage great numbers of labourers and sailors, were measures which spoke his prudence, as the sea was the natural resource of Athens. But he did not stop there. One day, in a full assembly of the people, he required that some person should be appointed to confer with him, upon a scheme of the greatest consequence, which was of such a nature as to require secrecy. The eyes of the whole assembly were instantly directed to Aristides, upon whose judgment they could depend. Themistocles communicated to him a project for burning the fleet of the allies, as an infallible means of mak-

ing Athens the umpire of all Greece. The report which Aristides made was such as virtue ought to dictate. He declared, that nothing could be more advantageous than the design of Themistocles; but, at the same time, nothing could be more iniquitous. The votes were unanimously on the side of justice.

Could have produced nothing but mischief.

Whatever might be the opinion of Aristides, the utility of the plan was, at least, very much to be doubted. The states of Greece, most justly provoked, would not have hesitated to unite their whole power against a perjured city; public hatred must have followed, and all her glory been for ever annihilated. And what advantage in the end could have compensated for the ruinous effects of such an undertaking? If the proper end of politics be to secure the happiness of nations, that is not to be attained but by adhering to the rules of morality; for every act of injustice leads to misfortune, were it only from its being accompanied with certain infamy.

Themistocles prevents the Grecian league from being weakened.

Themistocles showed much more prudence in the assembly of the Amphyctions, when the Spartans proposed that all who had not taken arms against Xerxes should be excluded from the confederacy. The Thessalians, Argians, Thebans, and several others being of that number, and the league of the Amphyctions, including only thirty cities, which in general were but very small, the proposed decree must have annihilated it, or brought it under the subjection of two or three of the principal states; but Themistocles opposed it, and carried his point by the soundness of his reasons. He had no design but what was particularly intended for the advantage of Athens, as it was

the purpose of the Spartans to rule in the assembly of the Amphyctions; but in this case, his opinion was guided by what was for the advantage of all Greece, the public good requiring that the ties of the league should rather be strengthened, than any of the members be separated.

Aristides passes a popular decree.

On the other hand, the people of Athens became seditious, and wanted to deprive the wealthy citizens of the little power which was left to them by the democracy. Aristides was of opinion, that it was necessary to give way to the popular rage, and passed a decree, which laid the government open to citizens of all ranks; because, by it, the archons might be elected indifferently from among the poor or the rich, so that there no longer remained the least check to licentiousness.

Before Christ, 476.

Nevertheless, Athens was on the point of carrying from Sparta that superiority which she had long held in Greece; and the only thing wanted for this purpose, was the merit of some of her own citizens, and the faults of a corrupted Spartan. The Greeks had sent a fleet to free some of their allies, who were still under the dominion of the Persian yoke. Pausanias commanded in chief, and the Athenians were led by Aristides, and Cimon, son of Miltiades. After the battle of Platea, Pausanias became insolent and voluptuous, preserving only the appearance of the manners of his country. When a relish for virtue is lost, the mind is easily disposed to become vicious; and he already projected a piece of treachery, while he still affected to serve Greece. His pride, severity, and haughtiness, and the magnificent manners of the Persians, which he at

Pausanias becomes corrupted.

last affected, disgusted the allies; while the two Athenian generals inspired them with respect and confidence, by a behaviour filled with prudence, justice and moderation, which very soon made them openly put themselves under the protection of the Athenians, and give them the command; and Sparta had either the moderation or prudence to renounce it. What glory must Athens have lost, if she had followed the odious advice of Themistocles!

Pausanius recalled and punished.

Pausanius being suspected of carrying on a correspondence with the enemy, was recalled. He exercised the royal authority, as tutor to one of the kings; but, by the laws of Sparta, he was subject to the judgment of the Ephori. One of his letters written to Xerxes was an incontestable proof of his guilt, which, when he found he could not elude, he fled for sanctuary to the temple of Minerva. They durst not force him from that asylum; but they built up the gate, even his own mother being among the first to carry stones for that purpose; and the Ephori left him to die of hunger. As superstition insinuates itself every where, the Spartans were very soon apprehensive that they had violated the temple; and, having consulted the oracle of Delphos upon the subject, they were commanded to erect two statues in honour of Pausanias, to appease the offended goddess.

Themistocles banished by the ostracism.

Some time before this, Themistocles had been obliged to submit to the ostracism, and his banishment was the fruit of that hatred which he had brought upon himself, by rating his services too high. Besides, he deserved great censure; for, having acquired an immense fortune since he had the management of

public affairs, he proved that his conduct had not been always regulated by the public interest. The Spartans charged him with being an accomplice of Pausanias, whose confidant he certainly had been, though he disapproved his schemes. The people of Athens believing him guilty, wished to proceed against him; but he fled from place to place, till he got to Admetus King of the Mollosians, who, notwithstanding the grounds for their former enmity, generously refused to deliver him up to his enemies. Some of his zealous friends secured the greatest part of his wealth. However, he had an hundred talents confiscated, though his original fortune was but three.

Aristides charged with the care of the Grecian finances.

On the contrary, a noble spirit of disinterestedness heightened the credit and glory of Aristides. The quotas furnished by the allies for the support of the war, had occasioned great murmurings, because they were not put under proper regulations. When the chief command was given to Athens, a new system was established to introduce order into the management of the public treasure, the right administration of that being the best criterion for judging of the public prosperity. It was therefore determined to fix the taxes in proportion to the revenue of every city, and to have the common treasury in the isle of Delos; but the most difficult part of this plan, was to find a person proper for putting it in execution. The suffrages were united in favour of Aristides, whose integrity justified a choice so honourable for him. He imposed the taxes, and conducted the finances, like a man who deserved to be admired equally for his abilities and uprightness. He succeeded so as to give

universal satisfaction, (an unheard-of prodigy,) and to support all the expenses of the state, with four hundred and sixty talents, by an economy which seemed to double the public treasure. The taxes increased greatly after him, which was naturally to be expected.

The disinterestedness of Aristides.

That great man continued in his original poverty, while he disposed of all the revenues of Greece. His near relation, Callias, the richest man in Athens, was accused of misdemeanour. The prosecutor charged him, as a crime, with leaving Aristides and his family in indigence. To wipe away such a reproach, he protested that he had often and fruitlessly pressed Aristides to accept of considerable sums to supply his wants, and called upon him as an evidence. Aristides confessed it was so, and added, That superfluous desires increase the wants of men, and that the sole way to be free from care and trouble, was to be satisfied, like him, with what necessity only required.

He died poor.

He died in this honourable poverty, and the public were at the expense of his funeral, and the support of his family. Plato places him above all that was great in his time, by a single expression. *Aristides*, said he, *studied to fill Athens with virtue*. He probably owed some portion of his merit to an excellent citizen called Clisthenes, to whom he was attached while a youth, and whose precepts, as well as example, tended to develope in him the seeds of so many noble qualities. That young man is fortunate, who feels within himself an admiration of great men. Nothing announces more satisfactorily that he is capable of imitating them.

CHAPTER V.

CIMON ADDS TO THE GLORY OF ATHENS.

Cimon, a worthy successor of Aristides.

CIMON, son of Miltiades, a worthy pupil of Aristides, after him succeeded to the greatest power. He added to the glory of his country, not only by noble actions, but by that gentle temper, and inflexible probity, which has so great influence upon the minds of men. In his youth, he had exposed himself to the contempt of the people by a life of dissipation; but his example serves to prove, that if the misconduct of youth is always hurtful, it is still possible to make atonement. The instructions of the most upright man in all Greece, having taught him equally the art of governing, and to walk in the paths of true honour, he made daily progress in the course of virtue.

His success against the Persians.

The Athenians were in some degree indebted to him for their superiority, and he employed the turbulent disposition of the people against their foreign enemies. He conquered a number of places from the Persians; attacked and destroyed their fleet, and that same day gained a remarkable victory over their land forces. He drove them out of Thrace, subjected the island of Thasus, which had stood a siege of three years, and spread terror even to the court of the great king.

Themistocles found shelter with Artaxerxes.

Xerxes had been assassinated, and his son Artaxerxes, surnamed Longimanus, was then king. Themistocles being constantly perse-

cuted by the Greeks, and finding no safety in Europe, fled to this prince, whose confidence he gained by swearing an implacable hatred against his own country. Plutarch says, that the king of Persia being desirous, some years after, to carry the war into the heart of Attica, Themistocles poisoned himself, that he might be freed from a commission which he abhorred. On the contrary, Thucydides, who was almost his cotemporary, believed that he died a natural death. *

Themistocles was one of those men, who are equally deserving of censure and praise, whose genius commands our admiration, while his character often appears contemptible. He saved Greece. It was he who raised Athens to power; and a grateful people should have pardoned his offences. An expression of his has been most deservedly cried up. After having bestowed his daughter upon a poor, but deserving man, he said, *I love merit without wealth, better than wealth without merit.* But he had amassed a sufficiency to enrich both his daughter and son-in-law.

The Egyptians having rebelled against the Persians, were assisted by the Athenians, who at first led them to conquer. If the Egyptians had been as warlike, and as jealous of their liberties as the Greeks, they certainly would have taken this opportunity of recovering their reputation; but this war concluded with their being again subjected to slavery. Though the

The Egyptians assisted by Athens, are conquered by the Persians.

* Themistocles did not die, till after Cimon had been banished and recalled. The connexion of ideas made me anticipate a little upon the dates. This is not a chronological abridgment, but a work intended rather to lead to reflections.

Persians were become excessively effeminate, they still preserved a great superiority over that people, and even defeated the Athenians, whose numbers were too small. Artaxerxes solicited the Spartans to join with him against the Athenians; but neither his offers, nor their own jealousy, could make them unfaithful to the league. Yet a fatal grudge very soon made a cruel division between the two republics.

Before Christ, 470. Misfortunes of Sparta.

Repeated misfortunes which Sparta suffered, served to discover the sentiments of the Athenians with regard to her. A dreadful earthquake destroyed almost all their houses; and the Helots rebelling, took up arms and joined the Messenians, and some other enemies of their masters. In this extremity, the Spartans implored the assistance of the Athenians, when Ephialtes the orator, one of the party of Pericles, who was then risen to credit, alleged, that far from assisting an ambitious rival, they ought to congratulate themselves upon her disgrace, and leave Sparta to be buried under her own ruins. But Cimon had too good an understanding, and too much greatness of mind, to adopt such false policy. Independent of the faith of treaties, the common interest of Greece, and the principles of honour and generosity, he saw that Sparta was a necessary restraint upon the licentiousness of the Athenians. He strongly opposed the specious pretences of ambition, and plainly showed, that they ought not to *suffer Greece to be crippled, nor Athens to be without a counterpoise.* In the end he prevailed; and, taking the charge of the commission upon himself, carried them assistance, and discharged his duty like a true patriot.

The Athenians assist them.

Some time after, when the Spartans had the same enemies to contend with, they applied again to the Athenians, and Cimon led some troops to their assistance; but, from an injurious distrust, they were sent back by the Spartans, an insult that prodigiously enraged the Athenian populace, and which they avenged upon the most innocent and most respectable of men. Cimon was banished by the faction of Pericles, as if he had supported Sparta against the interest of his own country.* War being very soon kindled between the two republics, the illustrious exile came with great zeal to offer his services to the Athenian army; but they commanded him to withdraw. His friends, to the number of a hundred, who were also suspected, desirous to dispel the unjust suspicions, and animated by his exhortations, threw away their lives in the first battle. The Athenians were victorious at Tanagra in Bœotia, a very melancholy prelude of the horrors produced by discord.

War between the two republics.

Cimon unjustly banished.

The prejudices against Cimon were dispelled, because the Athenians became every day more and more sensible of what they suffered by his absence; and he was recalled, after having been for five years banished, his rival Pericles moving for the decree. These examples of patriotism, at least now and then, repaired the errors committed by the passions. The first care of this worthy citizen, was to conclude a truce with the Spartans, after which he resumed his excellent system of directing the attention of the Athenians against a foreign ene-

Cimon recalled.

* In the following chapter, we shall see by what means Pericles arrived at power.

my, either with a design to increase their powe by noble and lawful means, or to fix their rest less dispositions, and prevent their cabals. H gained new victories over the Persians; an completed the conquest of the Isle of Cyprus that he might pass into Egypt, where the ene my had gained considerable advantages. The throne of Cyprus seemed at this time to be threatened with an approaching revolution.

Before Christ, 449. Treaty of Artaxerxes with the Greeks.

Artaxerxes had the prudence to sue for peace; and a treaty was concluded upon the following terms, viz. "That all the Grecian cities in Asia should be free, and have the power of choosing whatever laws and government were most agreeable to them; that the Persians should be debarred from sailing between the Euxine Sea and the coasts of Pamphylia; that none of their generals should approach these seas, nearer than a march of three *days*; and that the Athenians should not commit any hostilities in the king's territories." The Median war, the name by which it was known, had lasted fifty-one years, from the *taking* and destroying of Sardis. In the ordinary course of human affairs, Greece should have been crushed, but she proved victorious; which makes it highly worthy of our attention to observe, that this prodigy was more the effect of genius and prudence, than of valour. Miltiades did a great deal at Marathon, and Pausanias at Platea; but the counsels of Themistocles, Aristides, and Cimon, effected much more. The marine and the finances being intrusted to their management, became a fertile source of public prosperity.

End of the Median war.

Death of Cimon.

The death of Cimon was an irreparable loss.

Rich and disinterested, his wealth enabled him to serve his fellow-citizens, without infecting the goodness of his heart. His gardens were open at all times to the people. His table, which was plentiful and frugal, was also open to the poor, as well as to his friends; yet, far from seeking by that means to gain the good will of the people, he constantly declared against the evils attendant upon democracy. His justice and moderation towards the Spartans were imputed to him as a crime; but this was the language of the passions.

THIRD EPOCH.

FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF PERICLES, TO THE REIGN OF PHILIP, KING OF MACEDON.

CHAPTER I.

THE GOVERNMENT OF PERICLES TILL THE TIME OF THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR.

Character of Pericles.

ATHENS produced a genius as extensive as solid, and more improved by study than any one of those who had contributed so much to the glory of the state; but much more dangerous, if he abused his talents. I speak of Pericles, a man who was illustrious by his birth, of an exquisite taste, wonderful sagacity, a great ora-

tor, a great politician, and sometimes a great patriot; who nevertheless did much harm to his country, by yielding to his passion for engrossing all the power into his own hands.

His eloquence perfected by philosophy.

Eloquence, that art which is sometimes heavenly, sometimes destructive, according to the use for which it is employed, was the chief instrument by which he accomplished his purposes. Educated by the philosopher Anaxagoras, he had learnt of him to acknowledge a Supreme Being, to contemn idle fears and the fantastical puerilities of superstition, to improve his style by making it rather nervous than verbose, and to acquire a powerful energy, which could not be produced but by a refined judgment. From the time that the orator's pulpit served as a field for whoever had a desire to shine and acquire reputation, Athens was filled with eloquent speakers; but no one could subdue the multitude by persuasion like Pericles.

His policy to acquire power.

He studied man above all other subjects. He was perfectly acquainted with the genius of the Athenians, and all the springs by which an artful politician could govern them. Observing that they were so excessively fond of liberty as to become jealous of the reputation of their greatest men, and banish them at the very time their services ought to have placed them in the most respectable light, he affected at first not to intermeddle in public affairs, to make his appearance in the city but seldom, and to be only solicitous of military honours. Some time after, when Cimon, who was the only rival with whom he had to contend, was employed in some military enterprise abroad,

he seized the favourable moment to step forth, and, concealing his real disposition, flattered the people, and assumed the character of a statesman, renouncing society and all other pleasures, to dedicate his whole time to public affairs.

Seldom appeared at the public assemblies.

More artful than Themistocles, he knew how to guard against the dislike of the populace, by avoiding their public assemblies, except when his presence was absolutely necessary, employing his friends and agents to speak for him. The less pains he took to make a parade of his abilities, the more he was applauded when he thought proper to display them.

Corrupts the Athenians by prodigality.

His fortune was not sufficient to permit him to follow the example of Cimon in his liberalities, though it is the best method to secure the attachment of friends and followers; he therefore supplied the defect at the expense of his country. He not only divided the conquered lands among the citizens, but distributed the public money among them, to support games and shows, as also for the discharge of those duties which were ordained by the laws, a salary being appointed for those who assisted at the tribunals, or the assemblies of the people; and it may be said that the Persians had not done so much mischief to the Athenians, by laying waste their country. The finances dissipated in useless profusion; the manners of the people corrupted by a relish for pleasures, and an avidity for money; a rage for public shows, stimulated by invincible attractions; idleness cherished by resources hitherto unknown; the licentiousness of the popular assemblies increased by the frequent meeting of

a craving multitude; and the duties of a citizen debased by venality, were the produce of the ambitious policy of Pericles.

Weakens the Areopagus.

He did not stop there; but as his lot had not procured him any of those offices which lead to a seat in the Areopagus, that illustrious tribunal became the object of his hatred, doubtless because he was afraid of its justice and authority. He stirred up the people, whose motions he directed, against it, and accomplished his purpose by depriving it of the most important causes. Athens forgot her laws, and the government was changed at the pleasure of one man. Cimon was alive at that time, but employed in the war against the Persians; and, at his return, sincerely lamented this subversion of principles, frequently repeating, according to his custom, that the like was never seen in Sparta. He was therefore looked upon as the enemy of Athens, and sacrificed, by means of the ostracism, to the corrupter of the state.

He adorns Athens with noble buildings.

After the death of Cimon, the authority of Pericles continually increased. Master of the public finances, he lavished them in buildings, statues, and decorations calculated to please the people, and to make Athens the most beautiful city in the world. It was at that time that those masterpieces of architecture and sculpture, which have been since considered the models of good taste, and preserved all their beauty for several ages, were erected under the direction of Phidias; monuments, which were as much superior to those of Egypt, as true taste is superior to what is gigantic,

The allies complained loudly that the common treasure, which was intended for the defence of the country, and to support the war against the Barbarians, was devoted to the embellishment of a single city. They had justice on their side; but Pericles had the powers of rhetoric, and the approbation of the people. To give ear to him, the money belonged to the Athenians, since they fulfilled their engagements, and provided for the expenses which were necessary in support of the confederacy. Athens being plentifully supplied with arms and shipping, ought to deserve the admiration of future ages, by employing her wealth to noble purposes, and at the same time to provide for the sustenance of her citizens, to which nothing contributes more than the execution of public works, that rouse the activity of artists, and employ genius and bodily strength, producing from the same source both ornament and abundance.

Complaints of the dissipation of the public treasure, by the Allies.

The weakness of these arguments are evident at the first glance. Ought the money which was levied from the allies, for the support of the league, to be diverted to the use of Athens? Was not its destination already fixed? If there was an overplus, ought it not to be employed for the general benefit? Pericles, far from reducing the taxes, increased them a third; and for what purpose? Undoubtedly, to support these ostentatious expenses. Three thousand seven hundred talents, * which they cost, was an enormous sum, compared with the taxes levied in Attica, which, accord-

Pericles in this unpardonable.

* L.716,875 English.

ing to Demosthenes, in his Third Philippic, were reduced to a hundred and thirty talents.* By dissipating the public treasure, the state might be exposed to misfortunes of very doubtful consequences; but, what was infinitely worse, their ancient simplicity of manners was totally annihilated. Pericles might have deserved the same encomiums which Colbert *did* in France, if he had been at the head of affairs in a rich monarchy; but, as the minister of a republic, he deserved to be censured. The world will judge from facts.

His disinterestedness praised by Plutarch.

Plutarch very much praises the disinterestedness, frugality, and domestic economy of Pericles. To be sure, these are very respectable qualities, but by no means vindicate his government. Besides, if he did not add one farthing to his private fortune, how shall we account for what is related by the same historian? He informs us that Pericles, upon hearing the outcry which was raised against him, offered to pay the whole expense of the public works out of his own funds, upon condition that there should be no inscriptions put upon them except his name. But if it had been possible, Athenian vanity would not consent to it; and the people cried out, that he might still continue to draw from the public treasury.

Pericles entire master of the republic.

The rich set up a powerful rival against him in the person of Thucydides, the brother-in-law of Cimon. It was necessary that the one or the other must yield; and Thucydides being the weakest, was obliged to submit to the severity of the ostracism. From that time Pe-

* L. 25,187 : 10s.

ricles set up a sort of regal power, with which he so governed the people, that without paying the same regard to their whims as formerly, he still preserved an equal influence over their deliberations. A high reputation for probity strengthened that ascendancy which his eloquence and policy had given him over the minds of the people; to which he added military glory, having undertaken some expeditions in which he succeeded, by being always attentive to spare the blood of his fellow-citizens, whom he said he wished to render immortal.

His friends accused, with an intention of ruining him.

Such glory, and so much power, added to the hatred of those people who envied Pericles; and they endeavoured to ruin him. They begun with falling upon his friends, of whom the first was Phidias, who was accused of having robbed the public, particularly in making a magnificent statue of Minerva; but he proved his innocence; for, on weighing the gold, after taking it from the statue, it was found that he had faithfully employed the whole that had been delivered to him for the execution of the work. However, this did not prevent his being dragged to prison, where he remained till he died.* The famous Aspasia of Miletus, a woman of an elevated genius, whom Pericles tenderly loved, and at last married; a woman so deserving, that Socrates prided himself on having been her disciple, was accused of impiety and debauchery. It was with difficulty that her eloquence and the tears of Pericles

* M. Millot seems here to be mistaken; for it was not on this occasion, nor till a long time after, that Phidias was imprisoned. Vid. Pausan.

could save her. An insidious law was passed, by which it was decreed, that whoever should attempt to explain the phenomena of nature, contrary to the religion of the country, that is to say, without the interposition of the divinities of the Greek mythology, should be impeached. Of course, Anaxagoras, who was the first that, from reason, proved the existence of God, was summoned as being guilty of impiety; and Pericles, despairing of being able to vindicate him, prevailed with him to fly. All the disciples of that great man were accused of the same crime; but it was less against him, than against Pericles, that the blow was aimed.

Pericles accused.

At last the accusers, emboldened by success, attacked Pericles himself, as an embezzler of the public treasure, and obtained an order to compel him to give in his accounts. While he was preparing them, Alcibiades, who was then but young, one day said, *that he ought rather to think of not giving them.* And indeed Pericles took care to get rid of that business by the Peloponnesian war, which, some say, he then desisted from opposing; while others allege, that he provoked it on account of the situation of his own affairs. Plutarch accuses those people of malice who loaded him with such infamy; but Thucydides, whose authority is more to be depended on, assures us that the integrity of his administration placed him out of the reach of calumny. But when we reflect upon the character of Pericles, upon his ambition and politics, and those measures which created him so many enemies, it seems impossible to clear him of all suspicion. As Plutarch

observes, it is extremely rash to rake into the hearts of great men, to assign motives of their conduct, and to give an unfavourable turn to what will bear a good construction. He applies this true maxim to Pericles, from a supposition that his past conduct proceeded solely from his zeal for the public good; but in this he contradicts himself. We are seldom mistaken, when we judge of the actions of men by their character and principles.

Grievances complained of by the allies.

However, the Peloponnesian war, one of the most remarkable events of this history, was brought about by different causes. The Athenians, proud of their success and power, and forgetting that moderation which procured them the command, inspired all the cities of Greece with jealousy and hatred. They had ruined the Samians; subjected the Eginetæ; prohibited the Megarians from being admitted into their harbours or markets; alienated the Corinthians by assisting the Corcyræans, with whom they were at war; they had subjected Potidea in Macedonia, a Corinthian colony, to pay a tribute; by their tyranny, forced its inhabitants to rebel; and were besieging it with great vigour. It was upon this occasion that Socrates showed himself as great a warrior as he was an eminent philosopher. He was admired as a hero, and set an example to the whole army. Here he saved the life of his favourite Alcibiades.

The affair is debated at Sparta.

The Corinthians, and other malcontents, applied to Sparta, representing the ambition and injustice of the Athenians, and the necessity of opposing them; that they had threatened the

* De Herodoti Malign.

liberties of all Greece, pursuing their purposes with incredible activity, while the Spartans, with too much confidence and indolence, permitted that power to increase, which was ready to destroy them. The Athenian ambassador, in defence of his country, replied, that the Greeks themselves had appointed her to the chief command; that they ought not to forget the services she had done the league; that nothing but a baleful spirit of independence could have excited these complaints against her; but, however, if they disregarded the most solemn engagements, and should presume to attack Athens, they would find her ready to defend herself. He insinuated, what would have been thought extraordinary even in a monarchy, that in all times the strongest governed, and it was the law of nature.

Pericles determines the Athenians to go to war.

This answer was by no means satisfactory, and all the allies resolved to take up arms, though Archidamus, king of Sparta, proposed gentler measures. However, a negociation was set on foot, to gain time. Several articles were demanded of the Athenians, particularly to raise the siege of Potidea. Pericles, in the critical situation in which he found himself, insisted much upon the honour of his country; boasted of her resources;* showed the dangers of tamely yielding; and prevailed so far as

* According to Diodorus Siculus, he showed that there were still six thousand talents† in the treasury, besides immense wealth shut up in temples, and in the possession of individuals. Their army, already on foot, was twelve thousand strong, besides garrisons, and the troops of their colonies. Their fleet consisted of three hundred sail, and might be easily augmented. It must be owned, that Pericles had not sacrificed every thing to luxury.

† 1,162,500*l.*

to have the proposals rejected: and, war becoming inevitable, he formed a general plan of operations. His system was, to be sparing of the lives of his fellow-citizens, but to disregard their country being laid waste; not to hazard a battle against superior numbers; to provide for the safety of the city; and to dedicate his chief attention to the marine, which was the principal strength of the Athenians.

CHAPTER II.

BEGINNING OF THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR. ALCIBIADES. THE ATHENIANS DEFEATED IN SICILY.

Before Christ, 431. Strength of the two parties.

THE history of almost the whole Peloponnesian war, which has been handed down to us by Thucydides, one of the best writers, and ablest generals of antiquity, will supply military men with a number of interesting details in the course of a war which continued twenty-seven years; but which cannot be admitted into this work, as they would prove a fruitless trouble to other readers. Almost all Peloponnesus joined with the Spartans, besides the Phocians, Bœotians, Locrians, Megarians, &c. so that their forces amounted to sixty thousand men; while the Athenian army was reduced to about fifteen thousand, without reckoning sixteen thousand, of all ages, who remained for the defence of the city. It was not possible that Pericles could keep the field with so few troops; and it required all his eloquence to persuade the Athe-

nians to leave their lands, as they had done at the time of the Persian invasion, and to remain shut up within walls, while the enemy carried devastation to their very gates. According to the genius of the Spartan nation, Archidamus advanced but slowly; Attica was laid waste, but the Athenian galleys did no less mischief in Peloponnesus. A proof of the usefulness of the sciences was given at that time, otherwise an eclipse of the sun would have disheartened the troops, who were struck with superstitious terrors, if Pericles had not explained the cause of the phenomenon.

Eclipse explained by Pericles.

When the campaign was over, Pericles was ordered to pronounce the funeral oration, which was an Athenian custom, unquestionably more useful than that of celebrating the memory of the great, who may have deserved to be forgotten, or perhaps condemned.

Funeral oration.

A dreadful plague raged in Attica. Notwithstanding the silence of Thucydides upon the subject, it is said that this pestilence employed the whole attention of the famous physician Hippocrates, who rejected the splendid offers of a great king, and generously dedicated his services to the preservation of his countrymen. However, this dreadful scourge of the human race did not put a stop to the war; and the minds of the people being soured by misfortunes, they were angry with Pericles, and accused him of being the author of all their sufferings. He displayed his usual eloquence. He repeated to them the imposing names of glory and of liberty; but all his reasons could not calm the vexation of a volatile people. He was condemned to pay a fine, and

Before Christ, 430.

Pericles condemned and restored.

deprived of his command; but they instantly repented, begged his pardon, and prevailed with him to resume the reins of government. Such was the character of the Athenians.

Death of Pericles.

This singular man, who, by his astonishing abilities, had fixed the Athenian levity for forty years, died soon after of the plague. Nine trophies, which were the monuments of so many victories, the great progress which was made in arts and sciences, in commerce and navigation, furnish ample matter for his encomium. He said, when dying, that what he esteemed the greatest glory of his life, was, *that he had never made one of his countrymen wear mourning.* But did he not mortally wound his country? How could Plutarch be so lavish in praising him for his virtues, when he has represented him as the corrupter of the morals of the people? It is said that he was so oppressed with business at the close of his life, that he neglected Anaxagoras so much, as to make the philosopher retire to die in despair; but Pericles being informed of it, flew to console him, entreated him to live, and represented to him how much he had occasion for his advice. *They who require the light of a lamp,* replied Anaxagoras, *take care to supply it with oil.*

Complaint of Anaxagoras against him.

Inveterate hatred of the two republics.

If Pericles was the author of the Peleponnesian war, the implacable rivalship of Sparta and Athens was its first cause. When hatred is irritated by hostilities, the effects must be dreadful, as war between republics is marked with a character of singular inveteracy. The Abbé Mably observes, 'that monarchies may 'forget injuries, because the people are stamp-'ed with the character of the prince, who may

'be neither revengeful, ambitious, nor jealous; 'but in such republics as those of Greece, what 'magistrate can oppose or direct the torrent of 'public opinion, where the multitude govern? 'The Greeks could have no other rule but that 'of their passions.'

War carried on with the greatest cruelty by both parties.

From such cause, we see Potidea holding out a three years' siege, and the starved inhabitants feeding on human flesh. Sparta forgot her honour to gratify her revenge, and, for that purpose, sued for the assistance and friendship of the King of Persia. Both republics put to death ambassadors whom they stopped upon the road, as if they expected, by their savage cruelty, to exclude every possible means of bringing about a reconciliation. Sieges, battles, and perpetual incursions presented nothing to the view but a succession of horrid barbarities. The Athenians were governed by Cleon, a worthless man and insolent orator, who thought of nothing but to inspire the people with violent resolutions. The Spartans, who were naturally less moderate than the Athenians, yielded to the influence of their character; and, dreading an insurrection of the Helotes, selected two thousand of the bravest among them, who had done the best service in the course of the war, and, after crowning them with flowers, made them walk in procession, on pretence of recompensing them for their fidelity; and these wretched people immediately disappeared, having undoubtedly fallen the victims of atrocious treachery. It is not to be expected that the enemy were treated with more humanity.

The war continued to rage with the same fury for ten years, with nearly the same success, and the like losses on both sides. It is impossible but such accumulated sufferings must have made both nations desirous of peace; but the declaimer Cleon, and Brasidas the Spartan general, prevented proposals from being offered; the last from his thirst after fame, and the other from the heat of pride and arrogance. However, they both died; upon which a suspension of arms took place, and a truce, which was to continue fifty years, was soon after agreed upon. An appearance of concord seemed to spring up at that time, but hatred was rooted in their hearts, and treachery, instead of equity, with a boundless ambition, had full possession of their minds.

An unequal truce, after a war of ten years.

Before Christ, 422.

A young man of an illustrious family, remarkable for his fine figure and great wealth, equally distinguished for his abilities and his vices; sometimes virtuous, when he attended to the instructions of his friend and master Socrates, but almost always hurried into disgraceful irregularities when he yielded to his own inclinations, or followed the advice of his flatterers; yet capable of assuming all sorts of forms and characters, to profit by critical conjunctures. In one word, Alcibiades, who aimed at the government of Athens, and was naturally an enemy of peace, resting all his ambitious projects upon war and disturbance, and skilful in managing the temper of the people, endeavoured to rekindle the flame which was not entirely extinguished, and could not fail to succeed. Conscious that the licentiousness of his life exposed him to be condemned, he one

Alcibiades desirous to renew the war.

day thought proper to cut off the tail of one of his most beautiful dogs. It was immediately talked of all over Athens; and, upon being told that he was universally blamed for having disfigured the creature, *So much the better*, replied he, laughing; *I would have the Athenians speak of my treatment of the dog, that they may be silent about the rest of my conduct.* That volatile people were seriously engaged in trifles, which diverted their attention from things of the utmost importance.

He makes them break the treaty.

Both Sparta and Athens having complained of some violations of the treaty, Alcibiades took the opportunity of breaking it altogether. He caused Nicias, who was a very cautious general and a worthy citizen, with sentiments perfectly pacific, to be suspected by the people. He deceived the Spartan ambassadors, who were sent with full powers to accommodate matters; and, having persuaded them to tell a falsehood, caused them to be dismissed as impostors. However, Nicias had a strong party, and the people were divided between him and his rival, when it was proposed to determine the dispute by having recourse to the ostracism; but Hyperbolus, an impudent, worthless man, railed against both of them, that he might get the power into his own hands; upon which, both factions joined against him, and banished him. From that time the ostracism, which seemed to be debased by being employed on such a subject as Hyperbolus, was entirely laid aside. We formerly observed, that it was not intended as a punishment, but a precaution against the too great power of the principal citizens.

Ostracism laid aside.

If Alcibiades had been satisfied with cherishing the hatred of the Athenians against the Spartans, he might, perhaps, have prolonged the misfortunes of his country, without exposing them to the greatest misery; but this fiery genius formed the most daring projects, even while he was sunk in the bosom of pleasure. He planned the conquest of Sicily, as a prelude to that of Carthage, from whence it would be easy to come and take possession of Peloponnesus. Such chimeras were the produce of his fertile imagination, and, by his eloquence, he persuaded the Athenians to adopt them. In vain did Nicias attempt to convince them of the rashness of such projects, and the dangers to which they were exposed in pursuing uncertain conquests, while surrounded with enemies. He showed how trifling were the pretences for engaging in this war; but all to no purpose. Because the Leontines and Egestans, two states of Sicily, complained of the Syracusans, and implored the assistance of the Athenians, for there was no other reasonable pretence alleged, must Athens sacrifice her own safety and interest, in a cause in which she had no concern? Must she abandon her own country to the Spartans, to go and fight in Sicily? The sound reasonings of Nicias were not sufficient to prevail against the beauty, eloquence, and prodigalities of Alcibiades, which captivated not only the youth, but the people in general, so that they determined to take arms against Syracuse; and Alcibiades, with Nicias and Lamachus, were charged with this expedition. The Athenians had conceived the thought of making a conquest of Sicily in the time of

A project of Alcibiades against Sicily.

Pericles; but he was a man of too much sense, and too great influence, not to dissuade them from the attempt.

Before Christ, 415. Almost at the instant of their departure, an unforeseen accident filled all Athens with unlucky reports. The statues of Mercury were mutilated, without its being possible to discover by whom it was done. Whether it was a premeditated scheme, or the occasion presented the means, the enemies of Alcibiades took the opportunity of accusing him of this crime, or some other of the same kind; but being supported by the army, he showed much steadiness, and demanded an immediate decision. His accusers were not willing to consent, as circumstances were not yet sufficiently favourable; they therefore put off the affair, on pretence that the embarkation could not be delayed. The fleet at last set sail, with all the apparatus for a triumph.

Alcibiades accused of impiety.

Is recalled from Sicily to submit to a trial. Syracuse, a Corinthian colony, which had prospered greatly by commerce, was at first alarmed by the storm which threatened them, but they prepared afterwards to make a vigorous defence; and the misunderstanding which subsisted among the Athenian generals, gave them time to make the necessary preparations. The folly of the people of Athens contributed equally to serve them; for their army was scarce landed in Sicily, when Alcibiades was commanded to return, that he might be tried for impiety. His enemies had gained ground of him in his absence, and, assuming the mask of religion, expected to succeed at the tribunal of a people so unsteady and superstitious. Alcibiades, accused of impiety, suddenly lost all

that merit in the eyes of the Athenians, with which they had been formerly delighted. He durst not encounter the danger, and, escaping from his conductors, fled to Sparta. There he complied with the austere manners of that country; and, declaring himself the mortal enemy of Athens, acquired the love of that people, who formerly hated him. The Athenians sentenced him to suffer death for contumacy, and gave him up to the execrations of the priests. A priestess, named Theano, refused to minister to revenge, saying, *I am a priestess to bless, not to curse.* The accusation against Alcibiades, perhaps ill founded, though he might inwardly contemn the popular religion, was at least excessively indiscreet, for it provoked against his country the man in the world the most capable of doing it an injury. On hearing that he was sentenced to die, he cried, *But I shall let them know that I am still alive;* and he kept his word.

Flies to Sparta, and declares himself the enemy of Athens.

His lively courage, and the resources of his genius, might have been of great use in carrying on the rash expedition which he made the Athenians undertake. Some very extraordinary accidents, but which he might have brought about, would have been necessary to make them succeed; but the many uncertainties, and the slow timidity of Nicias, augmented the difficulty of the undertaking. He discouraged his troops, and increased the obstacles they had to encounter, by constantly repeating that they had done wrong in entering into this war. However, they laid siege to Syracuse. If the curious choose to see the particular history of this siege, which was written

Nicias behaved ill at the siege of Syracuse.

at full length by Thucydides, they will find it transcribed by M. Rollin. The Syracusans, enervated by peace and opulence, must have yielded, if the assistance which they solicited from Sparta and Corinth, had not very critically arrived to preserve them. Their applications were warmly supported by Alcibiades, and his counsels contributed very much to the distress of his native country.

Before Christ, 413. The Spartans raise the siege.

The besieged were preparing to surrender, when Gylippus, who commanded the succours from Sparta, arrived to revive their hopes, and to animate them with fresh courage. Nicias had lost his colleague Lamachus, and, having the sole command, was terrified at the approach of new dangers. He therefore applied to be superseded; and, by his letters, showed the hazardous situation of the troops. Demosthenes and Eurymedon were sent as colleagues with a reinforcement, to strengthen his army. The first of these was of a bold impetuous temper, and, openly contemning the tardiness of Nicias, rashly engaged the enemy in the night, and lost two thousand men in the field; so that the fatigue, diseases, and despondency of the army, as well as the danger to which Athens was exposed, by being kept in blockade by the Spartans, all together contributed to inspire them with a desire of raising the siege.

The Athenians defeated before Syracuse.

At that time, they might have easily made their retreat, without being exposed to any danger, as the enemy could not suspect such an intention; but an eclipse of the moon disconcerted the scheme. That phenomenon appeared supernatural; and Nicias, from a child-

ish superstition, delayed their departure, till Gylippus and the Syracusans had time to prepare for an engagement; and the Athenians, being beaten both by sea and land, were entirely defeated. Eurymedon fell in the field. Nicias and Demosthenes surrendered themselves prisoners, after having given fruitless proofs of their courage. According to Thucydides, they were cruelly and treacherously put to death, though Gylippus desired they might be sent to Sparta; but other writers say, that they killed themselves in prison. The Syracusans were revenged by the barbarities they committed; and such was the advantage Athens derived from this enterprise.

General idea of the government of Sicily.

Before we pursue the order of events, we shall take notice, that Sicily was in part peopled by colonies from Greece; and, till it regained its liberty, had been governed like Greece by a number of petty tyrants. At the time of the invasion by Xerxes, Gelon was absolute in Syracuse, and the Greeks implored his assistance; but being refused the command of their army, was content to defend Sicily against the Carthaginians, who had been persuaded by Xerxes to attack him, and he defeated them most gloriously. By his active worth and eminent services, Gelon deserved that the Syracusans should voluntarily choose him king. He animated them with a spirit for agriculture by his example, appearing frequently at the head of the labourers; and at his death, he was regretted as the father of his country. His brother Hiero, who succeeded him, notwithstanding his being exceedingly

vicious, attracted the praises of the poets whom he encouraged, but more particularly Pindar, whose lyre should not have been venal, since it was worthy of celebrating the greatest heroes. Thrasybulus, another brother, but still more vicious than Hiero, succeeded to the throne, but was expelled because of his tyranny, about four hundred and sixty years before the Christian era.

The Syracusans having shaken off the yoke, freed the rest of Sicily, and introduced a popular government. Their *petalism*, which was a bad imitation of the Athenian *ostracism*, continued but a short time, as it deprived the state of its best citizens. This is not the proper place to speak of the succession of tyrants who reigned in Sicily. It was not till about sixty years after, that Syracuse was enslaved by Dionysius.

CHAPTER III.

CONTINUATION OF THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR. ATHENS TAKEN BY LYSANDER.

Before Christ, 412. Consternation at Athens.

THE Athenians were still so infatuated with chimerical hopes, that the first person who brought the intelligence of their army being defeated in Sicily, was sentenced to be put to death; but very soon their vain expectations disappeared, their doubts vanished, and they sunk into the deepest consternation. Their

danger was the more imminent, as the Spartans, by the advice of Alcibiades, had fortified Decelia in the neighbourhood of Athens, from whence they could lay waste the whole country of Attica, from one end to the other, without interruption; and if it had not been for the usual tardiness of the Spartan government, Athens, lost in amazement, would probably have fallen a prey to her enemies. However, the moment of crushing her was let slip, she began to breathe, and profited by a careful attention to the resources which were still left in her power.

Council of old men appointed.

A council of old men was chosen to examine into the state of affairs, and upon the report made by them the people were to determine. It was found necessary to recover the finances and the marine. A thousand talents still remained in the public treasury from the beginning of the war, which had been prohibited from being touched by a decree formerly passed; but, upon the present occasion, a new decree made it lawful; and experience shows the great advantage of having funds in reserve to answer emergencies. The ruin of states has been often precipitated by a want of economy and of attention in this respect.

Ingratitude of Sparta to Alcibiades.

From the imprudent use she had made of power, and her present misfortunes, Athens lost the greatest part of her allies. A number of citizens, and even the Ionians, united with Sparta, chiefly by the intrigues of Alcibiades, who, breathing nothing but vengeance against his country, stirred up these states to rebel against her; but Agis, king of Sparta, whose wife he had debauched under the mask of virtue,

endeavoured to render him odious to the people; besides, the very high credit which he had acquired, excited the hatred and jealousy of the principal citizens. Sparta retained only a shadow of her former love of justice. Every idea of gratitude was lost in cabals and intrigues; and an order was despatched to Ionia to put Alcibiades to death, at the very time that he was greatly adding to his former services; but being informed of their intentions, he fled to Persia for an asylum.

Revolutions in Persia.

That empire was continually weakened by court revolutions, which are the never-failing attendants of despotic government. Artaxerxes Longimanus was succeeded by Xerxes his only lawful son, who was very soon assassinated by his natural brother Sogdianus. A few months after, Ochus, another son of Artaxerxes, dethroned Sogdianus, assumed the name of Darius, and reigned amidst faction and disturbance. The Greeks called him Νόθος, *the Bastard*. He was upon the throne when Alcibiades fled for shelter to Tissaphernes, governor of Sardis.

He flies to Tissaphernes.

He had lately prevailed with them to declare against Athens, which rendered the ingratitude of Sparta still more odious. His abilities, and his well-known fame, with his taste for the voluptuous manners of Persia, easily procured him the friendship and confidence of the governor. He taught Tissaphernes to keep the Greeks divided, by preserving the two parties so equally poised, that the one could not rule by the total destruction of the other. This was very artful policy; and perhaps the Persians had great occasion to adopt such a plan,

to guard them from the attacks of neighbours so bold and enterprising. It seems that stratagem or force, deceit or violence, from one nation to another, or even from one individual to another, are the great hinges of society; yet, if mankind pursued the natural path to true happiness, they would find that it has no foundation but in universal benevolence.

Dissensions at Athens.

However, at a time when every thing conspired to induce the Athenians to unite for their preservation, they were agitated by the most ruinous dissensions. Some of them were for abolishing democracy, and recalling Alcibiades. Pisander alleged, that nothing else could save them; but there were others who maintained, that this would subvert their liberty, and ruin their country. This unhappy city, always actuated by whim or groundless opinion, changed a bad form of government into one still worse. Four hundred citizens were chosen to exercise absolute rule. They proved egregious tyrants, dissolving the senate, and treading all laws under foot.

Alcibiades recalled, and serves his country.

The army, at that time stationed in Samos, on purpose to keep the allies to their duty, refused to consent to this innovation, and recalled Alcibiades, appointing him generalissimo, and entreating him to come and exterminate the tyrants. Alcibiades, who had acted in so many different characters, was delighted with the thoughts of once more commanding the Athenians; and, having prudently restrained the zeal of his troops, paved the way for his return, by gaining some conquests from the enemy. He attacked and destroyed the Lacedemonian fleet, and recovered the empire of the

sea. The Hellespont, Byzantium, and a number of important places, were obliged to submit to Athens, where the four hundred tyrants had been already deposed; and a decree passed for recalling Alcibiades, who was received with the greatest demonstrations of joy, while the people reproached themselves for whatever had been done against him. The priests being commanded to absolve him from the curses which had been denounced against him, one of them was such a plain-dealer as to say, *I have not cursed him, if he has done no injury to the republic.* As much as to say, that curses could only avail against crimes.

He is absolved by the priests.

Alcibiades suddenly became once more the idol of the people; but remembering the secret springs which his enemies had employed to ruin him, his artful policy made him assume a superstitious exterior, that he might guard against being censured again for his impiety; he therefore joined, in a most pompous manner, to celebrate the mysteries of Ceres. Here we may recollect the pliancy of his character, and we shall very soon see a new instance of Athenian inconstancy.

Once more the idol of the Athenians.

Sparta, dismayed at the success of Alcibiades, sent proposals of peace; and if reason could have dispelled the giddy intoxication of the Athenians, they had now an opportunity of terminating a war which had raged twenty-five years, to the ruin of the republic; but the harangues of a worthless declaimer prevailed over all sense of the public good, and every prospect of peace vanished. The Spartans chose Lysander for their general, as the fittest man to contend with Alcibiades. Lysander

The Athenians carry on the war.

was not ashamed to pay his court to the young Cyrus, son of the King of Persia, who was at that time governor of Asia Minor, from whom he obtained money to advance the pay of his sailors, by which means he seduced a number from the Athenians, to serve on board his own fleet; and while Alcibiades was busy in collecting money in Ionia, defeated the rash Antiochus, who commanded in his absence. The Athenians, who had reckoned themselves sure of making rapid conquests, were provoked by this check; and, deposing Alcibiades, appointed ten generals in his room.

Are defeated by Lysander, and Alcibiades deposed.

On the other hand, Lysander, who was still more remarkable for his ambition than his skill in war, was called home to his own country. His successor, Callicratidas, set an example of the ancient Spartan virtue, which could not be reconciled to the then state of affairs; and, by disdaining to pay his court to the Persians, had not money to supply his army. However, he gained some victories, and besieged Conon, the Athenian general, in the port of Mytelene; but he lost a great battle which was fought not far from the isle of Arginusa, near Lesbos, because he thought it was his duty to engage, notwithstanding the superior force of the enemy. *Sparta*, said he, *does not depend upon one man;* a wrong idea, since the safety of the whole may depend upon one man, if he is chief; and his glorious death could not wipe away the stain of imprudence. The Athenians had equipped one hundred and ten galleys in less than a month to reinforce their general, Conon; and the Spartans, with their allies, lost above seventy in this memorable engagement.

Callicratidas the successor of Lysander, defeated at the battle of Arginusa.

The Athenians condemned their generals, because the dead could not be buried.

We almost always see the Athenian glory sullied by popular madness; but there never was so shocking an instance as the present. That the happiness of the dead depended upon the interment of their bodies, was an opinion established in Greece, which they had derived from Egyptian prejudice; and was so firmly believed, that they were willing to sacrifice every thing for the sake of funeral honours. After the battle of Arginusa, the generals had allotted fifty galleys to bring off the dead, and to pay them the last duties; but a violent storm prevented their orders from being executed. The people, blinded by superstition, were persuaded that the dead called aloud for vengeance. They therefore caused the generals to be prosecuted and condemned, when six of them, who had merited the most glorious rewards, were executed for an imaginary offence, Socrates being the only member of the senate who steadily opposed such flagrant injustice. Such is frequently the tyrannic power of prejudice even in civilized nations; and though the Athenians were remarkable for genius, yet they were perpetually disgracing themselves for want of judgment.

Before Christ, 404. The Athenians defeated by Lysander at Ægos Potamos.

To please the Persians and the other allies, Sparta restored the command of the army to Lysander, whose manners were entirely opposite to the laws of Lycurgus, but who had abilities capable of recovering the greatest misfortunes. He took Lampsacus, upon the coast of the Hellespont, upon which the Athenians immediately followed him with a hundred and eighty galleys, and offered him battle, which he declined for several days, on purpose to

cherish in them an insolent security, that he might surprise them on the most convenient opportunity. This stratagem was the better conceived, as they had no port nor city near them, and were obliged to have their provisions brought from a considerable distance. Alcibiades, who had retired to Thrace, came to acquaint them with the danger to which they were exposing themselves, but they would not hearken to him; and continued to disembark every evening, after having insulted the enemy's fleet through the day. Lysander watched his opportunity when they were lying scattered; and, pouring upon them at a place called Ægos Potamos, made an easy conquest, cutting their army in pieces, and taking three thousand prisoners, who were condemned to death. Philocles, one of the Athenian generals, having been remarkable on former occasions for his cruelty to the Spartan prisoners, Lysander asked him what punishment he thought he deserved. *Do not accuse men*, replied he, *who have no judge; you are conqueror, make use of the rights of conquest, and behave to us as we would have done to you, if we had been victorious.* So true it is, that we should expect to receive the same injuries we have done to others.

Cruelty to the prisoners.

Athens was very soon besieged by sea and land; and these haughty republicans, intimidated by the pressure of misfortunes, lost their ancient courage. Instead of defending themselves with spirit, they offered to submit, upon condition that their city and harbour should be preserved. This proposal was debated in Sparta, where the Thebans and Corinthians

Siege of Athens.

were for destroying the city; but the more generous Spartans, recollecting the services they had done to the Grecian league, by preserving the whole states of Greece, concluded a treaty upon the following conditions. That the fortifications of the Piræus should be demolished, with the wall which joined it to the city; that Athens should give up all her fleet but twelve galleys; that she should yield all the towns she had taken; recal their exiles, and serve under the command of Sparta.

Thus, this dreadful war, which sprung from ambition, and became cruel from hatred, was brought to an end, after having lasted twenty-seven years, and proving as destructive to the Greeks as the confederacy had formerly been beneficial.

CHAPTER IV.

SPARTA CORRUPTED BY LYSANDER. THRASYBULUS DELIVERS ATHENS FROM TYRANNY. TRIAL OF SOCRATES. RETREAT OF THE TEN THOUSAND.

Ambition of Lysander.

THE ambitious Lysander, desirous of universal dominion, endeavoured to serve himself, without regarding the interests of the public. After his naval victory at Ægos Potamos, he abolished democracy in several maritime states, subjecting them to the government of magistrates who were at his disposal. He likewise changed the government of Athens, by putting that city into the power of thirty tyrants, under

the name of Archons, who committed the most unheard of cruelties. He corrupted the Spartan manners, by the introduction of riches; and fifteen hundred talents, which he sent thither, infected the vitals of the state; even Gylippus, who had been so celebrated for saving Syracuse, could not resist the temptation of embezzling a part of it, and, being convicted of the infamous theft, fled to escape punishment. The most prudent of the citizens were at first for proscribing, with execrations, the gold and silver brought among them by Lysander; but his friends proposed, that it should be dedicated solely to the uses of the state; which expedient was relished, and a law passed, that whoever kept any of the new money should suffer death; as if, according to the judicious reflection of Plutarch, individuals could long continue to despise what was useful for the state; or, when they opened their hearts to avarice, expect that any laws could prevent money from penetrating into their houses.

The Spartans corrupted with riches.

It is true, that the Spartans were infected with riches; but according to their new plan of government, was not a public treasure become absolutely necessary? How could they possibly support a fleet, or act out of their own country, without a revenue? Had they not applied to Persia more than once for money? It was absolutely necessary, that they should either adhere entirely to the laws of Lycurgus, or change their customs. Corruption had been gradually insinuating itself for a long time; and it may be questioned, whether the celebrated saying of Pausanias, who was then reigning, can be looked upon as entirely just. He was asked

what was the reason that the ancient customs were perpetuated in Sparta. *It is because the laws command the people*, said he, *and the people do not command the laws.*

Athens oppressed by thirty tyrants.

Sparta at least preserved her liberty, while Athens, oppressed by thirty tyrants, felt all the horrors with which slavery can afflict a people accustomed to independence; imprisonment, exile, confiscation of property, and death. Xenophon says, that the tyrants put to death more people in eight months of peace, than had been slain by the enemy in a war of thirty years. Theramenes, one of the thirty, was himself executed, for having opposed the cruelties of his colleagues.

Treachery of the Spartans towards Alcibiades.

Here we find Alcibiades make his appearance once more; having quitted his place of exile, and passed into Persia, with an intention to bring about a revolution in favour of Athens. The Spartans dreading him, engaged the governor Pharnabazus, by a piece of shameful treachery, to order him to be assassinated. The guards who were sent for that purpose, not daring to enter his house, set fire to it; upon which, Alcibiades rushing out with his sword in his hand, repulsed them, but fell at last under a shower of arrows shot at him in his flight.

His death.

Some writers give a different account of his death; but the only observation of real importance is, that with superior abilities, and an excellent genius for performing great actions, Alcibiades was the scourge of Greece; and by yielding to the transports of his passions, rather than to the counsels of Socrates, plunged himself into misery.

Before Christ, 408.

Notwithstanding the cruel precaution of the

Spartans, who had forbidden the Grecian cities to receive any Athenians flying from tyranny, yet Athens found an avenger. Thrasybulus, at the head of the fugitives, attacked the tyrants, and drove them out of Athens, and the government was intrusted to ten citizens; but the abuse of authority is so contagious, that they likewise became tyrants. The thirty implored the assistance of Sparta, and Lysander protected them with all his power. The king Pausanias marched against Athens, but with a secret desire to restore peace and good order. Thrasybulus, however, completed what he had undertaken, the tyrants were killed, and the ancient form of government was re-established. Similar revolutions are generally attended with bloody consequences. A considerable number of the accomplices of tyranny remained, and the public disorders had made an infinite number guilty; but the prudent deliverer of Athens easily foresaw that, by punishing them, the wounds of the state would be opened afresh, and therefore proposed an act of amnesty, by which all past deeds should be buried in perpetual oblivion. Unhappily, while the passions preserved their sway, civil dissentions leave behind them a ferment which a salutary mildness cannot extinguish.

Thrasybulus delivers Athens.

They still prevailed in Athens; and the proceedings against Socrates very soon disgraced that city, more than slavery could have done. Socrates, the first, says Cicero,* who brought philosophy from heaven; who placed it in cities, and introduced it into families; who induced

Socrates the most respectable of philosophers.

* Tusc. v. 10.

the people to pay regard to morals, to their duties in life, and to distinguish between good and evil; this true philosoper, the model of all those virtues which he taught, had long dedicated his whole attention to the instruction of youth. He despised the Sophists, whose vanity, covered with an empty display of science, made them decide upon every subject without knowing any thing, in a flow of language which conveyed nothing but false ideas; and therefore they were his enemies. He professed the religion of his country; but, by surmounting popular prejudices, directed to the one God those adorations which they lavished upon phantoms of divinity. He therefore could not fail to draw upon himself the hatred of the hypocritical and superstitious. These dangerous men plotted his destruction; and having succeeded by employing religion as a pretence against Aspasia and Anaxagoras, a pretence which easily conceals the most enormous wickedness, they planted the same battery against the most virtuous of mankind.

The Sophists plot his destruction.

Anytus and Melitus, two names most infamous in history, were the leaders in this conspiracy. Aristophanes, whose licentious and satirical comedies were not to the taste of Socrates, being undoubtedly picqued at his preferring the tragedies of Euripides, aimed the first blow at him, by ridiculing his character upon the stage. His illiberal satire, called *The Clouds*, set the patience of the philosopher in the clearest light; for being present, he stood the laughter of the audience with perfect composure, saying to his friends, *That he fancied himself at a festival, where he amused all the people.* Meli-

Aristophanes exposes him on the stage.

Accused by Melitus.

tus next having laid aside the mask, charged him with corrupting the youth, by introducing new deities. Socrates had been teaching for forty years, and his doctrine was universally known; it was therefore a most egregious absurdity, after so long time had elapsed, to charge him with it as a crime; but provided passion be gratified, it blushes at nothing.

He boldly stood trial.

Without consenting to accept of the assistance either of counsel or pleader, Socrates vindicated himself by a simple explanation of his conduct: 'I believe the existence of God,' said he, with energy, 'more than my prosecutors; and am so perfectly convinced of it, that to God and you I submit, to be judged in such a manner as you shall think most advantageous for you and for me.' They immediately condemned him, but without assigning a punishment. He had a privilege to set a fine upon himself, and his friends offered to pay it; but he generously refused to take that step, lest it should be reckoned an acknowledgment of guilt; and declared to the people, that he thought he was entitled by his actions, rather to be maintained at the expense of the republic. This noble spirit still more exasperated his enemies; and according to custom, they deliberated a second time, when he was sentenced to drink the hemlock, which was the mode of putting criminals to death; upon which, he calmly said to his judges, 'By your order I am going to suffer death; from my birth I was condemned to it by nature; but truth will speedily sentence my accusers to infamy.'

Is condemned.

Refuses to escape, and dies like a true sage.

His friends, anxious to get him out of prison, and persuading him to fly, he answered, That

it would be an insult against the laws. On the day of his suffering, he discoursed with them upon the immortality of the soul, and on the sentiments which the expectation of another life should inspire, proving that this truth, even though it were a matter of doubt, ought to regulate the conduct of every rational being. He cheered and comforted them. When the hemlock was brought to him, he drank it off without the least emotion; and died, saying to Crito, one of his disciples, *I owe a cock to Esculapius; take care you do not forget to acquit me of that vow.*

The Athenians repent.

After the Athenians had destroyed that true philosopher, they were penetrated with shame and remorse, paid the greatest respect to his memory, severely punished his accusers, and expressed the greatest abhorrence of every one that had the least share in the conspiracy. It was their constant practice to be guilty of enormous faults, always to repent, but never to amend. As the very extremity of all folly, they allowed the poets to ridicule their gods upon the stage, and punished their sages for endeavouring to inspire the people with sentiments worthy of the Deity. The thirty tyrants spared Socrates, though he openly opposed their tyranny; and it was soon after their expulsion, the four hundredth year before our era, that he was put to death by the sentence of the people. An unbridled multitude is not the least unjust, nor the least cruel, of tyrants.

We read with a great deal of pleasure what Rollin has written of a single person, such as Socrates; but the long minute relation which

he has given of the famous retreat of the ten thousand, is exceedingly tedious. The reason is, because we always find ourselves deeply interested and instructed by moral lessons, derived from the actions of men, while those other details are tiresome in themselves, and of little or no utility. Every one would study history, and improve, if it was not so overloaded with trifles, which are irksome even in gazettes. When a military man is acquainted with what is more essential in his profession, he may study the retreat of the ten thousand in Xenophon or Rollin; but to have a general idea of that memorable event, is enough for other people.

The young Cyrus attempts to dethrone his brother Artaxerxes Mnemon.

Darius II. Νόθος, being dead, his eldest son Artaxerxes Mnemon succeeded to the empire, and his brother, the young Cyrus, was governor of Asia Minor. It was a very great error to leave him in possession of that government, when he had given the most undoubted proofs of his being the slave of ambition. Having resolved to dethrone his brother, he persuaded the Spartans, to whom he had been a protector, to join him, while they, forgetful of their own interest, and the interests of Greece, suffered themselves to be seduced by delusive appearances. Thirteen thousand Greeks joined Cyrus, without knowing whither he was to lead them; but as he found they were averse from such an hazardous enterprise, he increased their pay upon the march.* When they approached near Babylon, the king advanced

Before Christ, 401.

* He promised them a darique and half a month; that is, according to Rollin, fifteen French livres; but his estimates are much under the numerary value of these days. He reckons the talent only at a thousand crowns, as in the time of Louis XIV.

with an innumerable army, and Clearchus, the Spartan general, advised the young Cyrus not to expose his person. *What*, replied the prince, *when I am attempting the throne, would you have me show myself unworthy of it?* The two brothers attacked one another, during the engagement, with the greatest inveteracy, and Cyrus was killed; but the Greeks, by their courage and discipline, showed themselves superior to the multitude that opposed them. They declared that they would rather die than yield; and, notwithstanding the infinite dangers and obstacles to which they were exposed, incessantly attacked, yet always victorious, ten thousand of them returned to their own country by the Hellespont, after a march of five or six hundred leagues. Hence this retreat is known in ancient history as the retreat of the ten thousand.

Cyrus killed in battle.

Retreat of the ten thousand.

Though Xenophon commanded at the end of the retreat, yet the history which he has written, seems in some respects not to merit the greatest credit. He represents Cyrus as a most accomplished prince, without finding any fault with that horrid attempt which ambition had inspired. The prince had charmed him by his genius and merit; but ought a philosophic historian to palliate his excesses? A rebellion against his king, hatred against his brother, a madness which made him attempt to usurp the throne by means of a civil war, must eternally stain the memory of Cyrus, notwithstanding the encomiums which have been bestowed upon him. In the letter which he wrote to the Spartans to obtain their assistance, he greatly extols himself above his rival, boasting that his heart was more noble, that he was better

Xenophon prejudiced in favour of Cyrus.

acquainted with religion and philosophy; and, what was undoubtedly a great merit in Persia, he could drink more without being intoxicated. The whole letter shows very little delicacy.

Ctesias the historian, whom we have sometimes mentioned, was attached to this prince, and entered into the service of Mnemon as his physician. Photius has preserved some fragments of his works, and Diodorus frequently copied him, though he could not have chosen a worse guide.

Ctesias the physician of Cyrus.

CHAPTER V.

AGESILAUS IN ASIA. HE IS RECALLED. SHAMEFUL TREATY WITH THE PERSIANS. OF THE THEBAN REPUBLIC, TILL THE BATTLE OF LEUCTRA.

The glory which always accompanies illustrious actions, is undoubtedly the greatest incentive to noble attempts. The courage of the Greeks being animated by the retreat of the ten thousand, they once more took arms to recover the liberty of their Asiatic colonies, and became more desirous than ever of humbling the Persians. Agesilaus, brother of Agis king of Sparta, was the great hero of this war. Having no right to the crown, he was bred up as a private person, in all the severity of Lacedemonian manners; but, upon the death of Agis, he contended for the succession with his

War against the Persians.

nephew Leotychides, who was believed to be the natural son of Alcibiades, though Agis, when dying, acknowledged his legitimacy. He was preferred, and truly deserved it, by possessing every heroic quality, as well as a happy talent for acquiring the good-will of the people. Such was the love of the whole nation for him, and so great was his credit in Sparta, that the Ephori condemned him to pay a fine, only because *he engrossed to himself those citizens who belonged to the republic*. His predecessors had continual disputes with the Ephori and Senate, but no such thing happened during the whole of his reign. He always reverenced them, and, far from lessening their authority, increased it by a ready submission to the laws. As he was lame, nothing but a very uncommon share of merit could have made him so loved and respected, by a people who looked upon the least corporal defect as inexcusable.

Before Christ, 396. Agesilaus made the Persians tremble.

The war against the Persians being intrusted to his conduct, he required a council of thirty captains; and Lysander, who had assisted in procuring him the throne, was placed at their head. Agesilaus, at setting out, promised either to conclude an honourable peace, or to press his enemies so as to disable them from giving any disturbance to Greece; and, in a short time, filled all Asia with a dread of his arms. The Persian governors or satraps trembled at his approach. The Spartan virtue, and rigid discipline, were admired in the person of Agesilaus; and the haughty pride of the Persians seemed to pay homage to him in the conferences which he held with the officers

of their king. Equally deaf to their offers and threatenings, he saw their provinces ready to submit, and was preparing to carry the war into the heart of the kingdom, when he was suddenly recalled to protect his country.

League of the Greeks against Sparta.

A very dangerous league was formed against Sparta by means of the intrigues of the Persians, or rather the influence of their gold. Thebes, Argos, and Corinth, unwilling to submit any longer, revolted against the Lacedemonians, and Athens followed their example, at the pressing instances of the Thebans, to whom she, in a great measure, owed her liberty. Lysander, who commanded on the Hellespont, hastened to stifle the confederacy in the beginning; but he fruitlessly expected assistance, and was killed in a very unequal engagement.

Death of Lysander.

His ambition.

The haughty pretensions of this famous Spartan occasioned variance between him and Agesilaus. To uncommon talents, he added all the vices of an ambitious man. Unjust, treacherous, and cunning, he paid no regard to men nor to his oath. Some time after his death, it was discovered that he had formed a plan for seizing the crown. He intended to abolish the order of succession. He had corrupted the priests, that they might make the oracles declare for him; and in the next place, would have had recourse to the right of the strongest, as he had done when the Spartans and Argians were contending about their boundaries; on which occasion he said, showing his sword, *Here is what will give us a right!* Notwithstanding his having introduced riches into Sparta, Lysander was always poor; a singular

proof of the effect which ancient manners have even on corrupted minds. When the state of his affairs was known, two considerable citizens, who were to have married his daughters, refused to fulfil their engagements. This meanness made them universally infamous, and they were condemned to pay a considerable fine.

Agesilaus, recalled from Asia, submits to the laws.

This distracted state of the republic made the Ephori recal Agesilaus, who, notwithstanding the allurements of victory, instantly obeyed. *I know*, said he, *that a commander does not deserve that name, except when he is guided by the laws, and is obedient to those who are invested with their authority.* Before he arrived, Conon, one of the Athenian generals, who had been defeated at Ægos Potamos by Lysander, added to the distresses of Sparta. Having the command of a Persian fleet, he attacked that of the enemy near Cnidus, took fifty of their galleys, dispersed the rest, and made almost all the Lacedemonian allies revolt. Agesilaus received the news when he was preparing for an engagement in Bœotia; but, being obliged to dissemble, gave out that they had gained a victory, and animated the courage of his troops by offering a sacrifice of gratitude for their success. The battle was fought on the plains of Coronea, and, notwithstang he was wounded, and the Thebans made a very brave resistance, he gained the victory. At his return to Sparta, he was only to be distinguished by his modesty, frugality, temperance, and economy, as if he had not brought with him even the least idea of the manners of Asia.

Agesilaus victorious at Coronea.

Conon having laid waste the Spartan coasts, set about rebuilding the walls of Athens with Persian money; and the Lacedemonians were vexed to see their greatest rival in a fair way to recover her former power. Induced by contemptible envy, they made a sacrifice of both honour and equity, by sending Antalcidas to the governor of Lydia, not only to defame Conon, but to offer terms which were most disgraceful to Greece. Antalcidas, who was the enemy of Agesilaus, could find no other method of lessening his power, and checking him in the pursuit of glory.

Conon rebuilds the walls of Athens.

On this occasion, the Persians prescribed, in the style of conquerors, the treaty, bearing that all the Greek cities of Asia should continue subject to the king of Persia, all the rest to remain at liberty, and to choose their own mode of government; that the king should keep possession of the islands of Cyprus and Clazomene, and leave to the Athenians the islands of Scyros, Lemnos, and Imbros, to whom they had formerly belonged; and lastly, that he would declare war against any who should reject these articles. At first, the Thebans alone steadily refused; but they afterwards yielded to example.

Before Christ, 387. The Spartans conclude a shameful treaty with the Persians.

Thus the passions and wretched policy of the Greeks in one instant annihilated the advantages gained by so many victories, and those eminent virtues for which they had been deservedly distinguished. While they were united for the common interest, they triumphed over, and gave law to the most formidable power; and felt the benefit of a confederacy, from which they derived both honour and

Effects of the dissensions among the Greeks.

safety; but afterwards, when they became divided by weak jealousy, and a desire of governing, they gave themselves up to every excess that could be dictated by rage and hatred, acting more cruelly by one another than those nations whom they looked upon with contempt as barbarians. After their principles, laws, and manners were destroyed by civil discord, they became so grovelling as to crouch before those very barbarians, even without being conquered, and to such a degree as solemnly to sacrifice the liberty of those colonies which, by force of arms, they had freed from slavery. Such was the effect of the rivalship between Sparta and Athens. What a difference between the emulation which excites men to perform worthy and noble actions, and that ambition which urges them to be guilty of injustice, and hurries them on to misery!

Before Christ, 382. The Spartans seize the citadel of Thebes in time of peace.

Sparta having recovered her power in Greece, made no better use of it than upon former occasions, but played the tyrant without being sensible, from experience, that this tyranny would occasion her destruction. Phœbidas, one of her generals, on his march into Thrace to subdue Olynthus, whose power had been dreaded from the time that it had shaken off the Athenian yoke, being encamped in the neighbourhood of Thebes, where two factions were tearing one another in pieces, seconded the intentions of one of the leaders, and surprised the citadel, which was called Cadmea. This violence in time of peace was a crime of the blackest dye.

Judgment of the Spartans upon this affair.

However, when it was complained of at Sparta, Agesilaus, unhappily too much inclined

to war, said it was necessary to examine whether the place was useful; that they would, and indeed ought to do of their own accord, whatever was of advantage to their country. The event will show, as we have formerly observed, that true interest is inseparable from justice. Agesilaus, in this case, contradicted himself; for, on a former occasion he said, speaking of the king of Persia, *Can this king, whom you call great, be more so than I, if he is not more just?* The decree of the Spartans upon this affair of Thebes is a most shameful contradiction. It bore, that Phœbidas should be deprived of the command, and pay a fine of a hundred thousand drachmæ; but that they should keep possession of the citadel, by placing in it a strong garrison.

Four hundred Thebans take shelter in Athens.

After such extraordinary proceedings, the Spartans ought to have been invincible, or expect some very violent revolutions. More than four hundred Thebans, with hearts filled with the desire of vengeance, had fled for shelter to Athens; and a decree of banishment, which was passed during their absence, added greatly to the provocation. One of the number banished was Pelopidas, who, by his birth and fortune, but still more by his activity, courage, and virtue, ought to be esteemed one of the first of men. He had Epaminondas for his friend, who was as noble-minded and high-spirited as himself; but, being poor, and a philosopher who dedicated his whole time to study, the oppressors of Thebes considered him as an individual from whom they had nothing to apprehend, and therefore allowed him to remain in the city. However, we shall see these two he-

roes amply revenge the cause of their country upon the ruins of haughty Lacedemon.

Pelopidas delivers his country.

Though Pelopidas was still young, he undertook to deliver his country, and infused the same zeal into all the exiles, with which he himself was inspired. He kept up a secret correspondence in the city, into which he entered privately with eleven of his companions; and, though the conspiracy transpired, he executed his scheme with success and intrepidity. The principal magistrates were assembled to celebrate a festival; and one of them having received a letter from Athens, which gave information of the plot, refused to open it, saying, *Let us leave business till to-morrow.* While these magistrates neglected the public affairs, they were put to death, the prisons were broken open, and the Thebans invited to freedom. Epaminondas, who till this time had restrained his zeal, from a dread of spilling the blood of his fellow-citizens, joined the deliverers of his country. Next day all the exiles arrived, and were followed by an Athenian army of five thousand five hundred men; the cities of Boeotia likewise hastening to send succours. At last, the insurgents laid siege to the citadel; and the Spartans, being compelled by the rest of the garrison to open the gates, begged that they might have leave to depart where they pleased, which was granted. The Spartan army advanced with their usual tardiness; and if it had not been for that inactivity, they might have saved the place.

The Athenians abandon the Thebans, and soon renew their alliance.

The Athenians, with their usual levity, very soon repented of their having generously assisted the Thebans, and basely abandoned their

cause; notwithstanding all their efforts, Pelopidas found means to bring them back. He caused a proposal to be made to Sphodrias, an imprudent Spartan general, for seizing the Piræus, which must have made Sparta mistress of Athens. As ambition justified every thing, Sphodrias eagerly embraced the scheme, but, by employing improper means, failed in the attempt. Athens loudly complained, but the Spartans refused to give them any sort of satisfaction. The Athenians therefore immediately renewed their alliance with Thebes, and equipped a fleet, which, sailing under the command of Timotheus, son of Conon, insulted their coasts, and took from them the island of Corcyra.

Agesilaus carries on the war unsuccessfully in Bœotia.

Agesilaus was sent into Bœotia; but being weighed down with age, he could only carry on a war of skirmishes, which, so far from bringing the Thebans to submission, served to discipline them for more important services. Antalcidas, seeing him come back covered with wounds, said to him in raillery, *So you have been well paid for teaching the Thebans to fight, since, but for you, they neither would nor could have learnt the art of war.* And indeed Pelopidas soon showed that he had profited by his lessons; for at the battle of Tegyra, he pierced through the army of the enemy, which was three times his number; and, till the present occasion, it had never been heard that the Spartans had been beaten even by equal numbers. Their insolent pride should then have felt, that a free people may become formidable to the most warlike tyrants.

The Thebans forsaken by the Greeks.

This war, which was kindled by the ambition of an unjust people, filled Greece with complaints and murmurs. Peace was the universal wish, and deputies were sent to Sparta to assist at the negotiation. Epaminondas, who was the deputy from Thebes, nobly supported the public interest and the cause of liberty. Agesilaus, asking him in an imperious manner, if Bœotia must then remain independent? he replied, by a similar question, Must Laconia remain independent? The Spartan, too much irritated against Thebes, struck their name out of the treaty which was ready to be concluded; and the other states joined in it from fear, giving up the people, who at that time deserved the highest esteem.

CHAPTER VI.

THEBES POWERFUL IN THE TIME OF PELOPIDAS AND EPAMINONDAS. ITS FALL. STATE OF GREECE BEFORE PHILIP OF MACEDON.

Epaminondas, general.

SPARTA, with all the states of Greece, coming to pour upon Thebes, she seemed in all appearance to be inevitably ruined; but two men, such as Epaminondas and Pelopidas, are sufficient for a country, when the hearts of the people are filled with the ardour of true patriotism. The first of these was appointed general, with the assistance of several colleagues. The second, being no longer in office, command-

ed the *sacred band*, a formidable corps consisting of three hundred young heroes, who engaged themselves by oath to defend one another to the last breath. * When Epaminondas began his march, he was told that there were some unfavourable omens; to which he replied by a line in Homer, *To defend our country is the happiest omen.* Superior to superstitious weakness himself, he knew the influence it had on vulgar minds; therefore, to prevent the bad effects, he invented some fortunate auguries, which his soldiers received with perfect confidence. Sacred band.

The battle of Leuctra decided this great quarrel. The Spartans and their allies brought twenty-five thousand six hundred men against six thousand four hundred, of which the Theban army consisted. This great inequality did not prevent Epaminondas from attacking the enemy. What may be reckoned temerity in some circumstances, may be in others prudence. The allies of Sparta were discontented. The Thebans were in perfect discipline, and animated with a most enthusiastic love of liberty; besides, it was necessary to prevent the junction of fresh forces which were expected by the enemy. The general made such excellent dispositions, and was so well supported, that he gained a complete victory. Sparta had never lost so many of her people upon any occasion; their king, Cleombrotus, with four- Before Christ, 370. Battle of Leuctra.

* When Pelopidas was leaving his house, his wife, in tears, conjured him to take care of himself. *This should be recommended to the young men*, said he; *but a chief should be requested only to preserve those that are under his command.*

teen hundred Lacedemonians, being killed on the spot.

Magnanimity of the Spartans after their defeat.

Upon this occasion, a striking instance of the old manners was seen at Sparta. The news of their misfortune arriving while they were celebrating the gymnastic games, the Ephori did not allow them to be interrupted, sending only the list of the killed to the houses of the people. It is difficult to conceive the various impressions which that list produced. Some congratulated themselves upon the glorious deaths of their children, while others could not be comforted with the thoughts of theirs having survived such a defeat. The women, more particularly, distinguished themselves by these sentiments, which were perhaps more the effect of a ferocious disposition than of true courage.

The law against cowardice suspended.

As a number of the combatants had fled, and the laws decreed disgraceful punishments against cowardice, it was to be dreaded that, at a time when the republic required as many soldiers as they could raise, a rigid severity might have fatal consequences; they therefore gave power to Agesilaus to change the laws as he should think convenient. That prince found a most prudent modification; and declared, at the meeting of the assembly, *That the laws might be suffered to sleep for one day, and afterwards to resume their whole power.* Though the spirit of legislation ought to yield to conjunctures, yet a state runs a great risk of losing the benefit of her laws, when circumstances oblige them to be infringed in favour of those whom they must have condemned. Perhaps, on such an occasion, a new legislator might be necessary.

It was become a proverb, *That a Spartan woman had never seen the smoke of an enemy's camp;* and it was frequently repeated by Agesilaus; but he had the vexation to witness the contrary. The Theban army increased every day by the defection of the allies of Sparta, and, penetrating into Laconia, laid waste the whole country; but the town was saved by the prudence of Agesilaus. He remained shut up in the city, and avoided an engagement, because a defeat must have produced irremediable consequences, as Sparta had no fortifications, and could not long resist an enemy. But Epaminondas being afraid to excite envy and hatred, if he destroyed a republic whose name could not fail to impress future ages with ideas of respect, was satisfied with having checked their tyranny, and retired to his own country covered with glory and honour, after having freed the Messenians from the Spartan yoke.

Epaminondas penetrates into Laconia.

It would have been very extraordinary, if Epaminondas and his colleague Pelopidas, had not tasted, like many others, of republican ingratitude. They had continued in the command four months longer than the time allotted, on purpose to carry on the expedition against Peloponnesus, which at their return was reckoned a capital offence. The public safety is the supreme law, and it spoke too loud in their favour not to be attended to. Epaminondas pleaded his own cause, and declared he would willingly suffer death, if they would consent to allow him the whole honour which was derived from his late services, and declare that they were performed without the approbation of the republic; so that, instead of being con-

He is accused at his return with Pelopidas.

demned, he was more and more admired. This hero was so much above the petty meanness inspired by vanity, that he performed, with the greatest attention, the duties of an inferior employment, to which his enemies got him appointed as an affront. *Employments*, said he, *dignify the citizen; but the citizen likewise dignifies the employment.*

League of the Greeks against Thebes.

The Spartans, however, being humbled, implored the assistance of the Athenians, who, induced either by compassion, or jealousy of a rising republic, promised to unite with them in the same common interest, and several other states entered into this league. Every honourable sentiment giving way to a wretched policy, the allies sued for the protection of the King of Persia; but Pelopidas was deputed by Thebes to go and disconcert their measures. The glory which he had acquired, joined to his great abilities, procured him the esteem of Artaxerxes Mnemon, whom he easily persuaded to favour a people who had never gone to war with Persia, and might preserve the balance of power between their enemies of Sparta and Athens.

Pelopidas decides a contest for the crown of Macedonia.

This illustrious general soon after acquired new honour, by executing a commission more worthy to employ a Grecian chief. He was sent against Alexander the tyrant of Pheræa in Thessalia, whose ambition and cruelty made him dreaded by all his neighbours; but the tyrant, not caring to wait his arrival, fled from his country. At this time Macedonia was torn in pieces by the quarrels of two sons of Amyntas II. the last king, who, contending for the succession, applied to Pelopidas to decide the

dispute. As soon as he arrived, peace was restored; and he carried with him thirty children of the first families of the country as hostages, and among the rest Philip, whom we shall soon find upon the throne.

He braves the tyrant of Pheræa, though his prisoner,

Some time after he had settled this dispute, which was more honourable for himself and for his country, than victories purchased at the price of human blood; by being too confident, he fell into the hands of Alexander of Pheræa, whom, though his prisoner, he threatened to punish for his crimes. The tyrant having asked him, wherefore he was so desirous of being put to death, he replied, *It is that you may suffer the sooner, by deserving still more the hatred of gods and men.* Being rescued by Epaminondas, he too unguardedly yielded to a thirst for revenge; and, desirous of slaying the tyrant with his own hand, imprudently exposed himself in the engagement, till he fell all covered with wounds, at the time his army gained the victory. The tyrant was assassinated while he was flying, his own wife being at the head of the conspiracy.

His death.

Before Christ, 368. New expedition of Epaminondas.

All Greece, with an eye of jealousy, beheld the Thebans, whom they formerly despised, become the arbiters of the nation. Their superiority depended upon a single person, and they were very soon to lose him. A civil war having broke out in Arcadia, between the Tegeatæ and Mantineans, Thebes declared for the former, while Sparta and Athens joined their adversaries. The command being intrusted to Epaminondas, he made a second attempt upon Sparta, and penetrated even to the public square; but Agesilaus having fortunate-

ly been informed of his intention, saved the city by his prudence and courage. Lest he should be enclosed between two armies, Epaminondas found himself obliged to retreat, and was closely followed by the allies. The famous battle of Mantinæa was fought, in which Epaminondas gave every proof of military skill, and sustained the combat with most heroic courage, till he was wounded in the breast with a javelin; a wound which was to conclude and crown a life of the greatest glory.

Battle of Mantinæa.

Death of Epaminondas.

During the engagement he was carried to the camp, where the surgeons declared that he would die as soon as the weapon was extracted from the wound. His only care then was to be informed of the success of the battle, and to know what was become of his arms. Upon seeing his buckler, and being told that Thebes had conquered, he comforted his afflicted officers. 'Do not,' said he, 'look upon this day as the last of my life, it is rather the beginning of my happiness, and the completion of my glory. I leave Thebes triumphant, Sparta humbled, and Greece freed from slavery.' As his friends were regretting that he was to die without children, he added, that Leuctra and Mantinæa would be his children, and save his name from sinking into oblivion. He then plucked the javelin from his breast, and instantly expired.

Some anecdotes of Epaminondas.

Epaminondas was one of the greatest men of antiquity. Philosophy, which was the happiness of his private life, did not prevent him from dedicating himself entirely to public business, when called upon by his country. His mind, formed by study, was equally capable of

discharging all the duties of a great general, or of a private citizen. He was never to be seduced by honours, and all his pursuits were for the glory of his country. Being penetrated with the deepest sentiments of filial piety, he said, after the battle of Leuctra, *My joy rises from what my father and mother must feel, when they are informed of our victory.* With all his knowledge, he was so modest, that he well deserved the encomium which was given him, *That no one knew more, or spoke less.* Continuing still poor with such means of enriching himself, we may judge from the following anecdote, what use he would have made of riches. He sent one of his friends to ask a talent from another citizen, who, having come to inquire the reason, *It is because,* said he, *that man is in want, and you are rich.* In one word, Cicero places him at the head of the great men of Greece. *

Before the time of Epaminondas, Thebes made no figure; but, with the assistance of Pelopidas, he raised it from nothing, and made it the wonder of the age. After his death, it sunk again into its original obscurity. The Theban power suddenly vanished, and the people preserved the character of stupidity, which has been ascribed to the heavy air of their country. However, besides Epaminondas and Pelopidas, Bœotia has had a Pindar and a Plutarch. But even these authors allow, that the idea which the rest of the world had of the Bœotians was not without foundation: yet they are proofs that an unfavourable climate

Thebes sinks back into obscurity.

* Epaminondas, princeps, meo judicio, Græciæ. Tusc. l. i. 4.

may produce uncommon geniuses. Culture is oftener wanted than soil.

Before Christ, 362. The battle of Mantinæa at last induced the Greeks to think of a general peace, which, if they had been wise, they never would have broken; they therefore agreed upon the plan of the treaty entered into with Artaxerxes Mnemon, that every city should be independent. As the Messenians were included in this general peace, the Spartans refused to accede, and sent assistance to the Egyptians, who had rebelled against the King of Persia; so that, instead of recovering their late misfortunes, they imprudently engaged in a foreign war. Agesilaus, though above eighty years old, set out at the head of the army; and being offended with Tachos King of Egypt, for not appointing him general, as he expected, he attached himself to Nectanebus, who was the cousin and enemy of Tachos, raised him to the throne, and afterwards died in Africa, where he was detained by a contrary wind on his return to Greece.

Death of Agesilaus.

Xenophon extravagant in his praise. Agesilaus was connected with Xenophon, whom he engaged to educate his sons at Sparta, that they might be taught, as he said, the first of all sciences, to know how to obey and to command; and it is from thence we see the historian too much prejudiced in his favour. The extravagant encomiums which he has lavished upon Agesilaus, cannot conceal the defects in the character of that illustrious Spartan, who was sometimes unjust, passionate, and arrogant, and always too fond of war. Plutarch mentions, that when in Asia, he caused his tent to be pitched in the sacred groves, that the

gods might be witnesses of his most secret actions. The motive was excellent; but what need was there for his going to the sacred groves? This fierce hero was a child among his children, and used to toy and play with them. Some person having surprised him when so employed, he begged him not to mention it, till he himself should be a father.

State of Greece till the reign of Philip.

The affairs of Greece deserve very little notice, till Philip began his ambitious projects. They were become, if we may use the expression, like a machine whose springs were much worn, ill fitted, and exposed to break on the first shock. An universal spirit of party, and the interest of individuals, generated cabals, and annihilated every noble idea. Every city had a desire to domineer over the rest, though incapable of preserving order among its own members. Sparta languished; Thebes was no longer any thing; Athens became daily weaker and weaker; so that Chios, Cos, Rhodes, and Byzantium, rebelled against her. Three able generals that still remained to her, Chabrias, Iphicrates, and Timotheus, disappeared in a very short time. The first was slain before the Isle of Chios; the two others were accused by the faction of Chares, one of their colleagues, a vain man, and perfectly indifferent about the good of the state. Timotheus quitted his country, because he could not pay a fine which he did not deserve to have imposed upon him; and Iphicrates procured himself to be acquitted, by arming a number of young men, whose daggers intimidated the judges. *I must have been an egregious fool*, said he, *to carry on war for the Athenians, and not do it for myself.* This

was the language of a rebel insulting the laws of his country. All the undertakings of the Athenians failed, because they were led by their orators; and those people who rebelled against her authority remained in peaceable possession of their liberty.

Mausolus and Artemisia.

Rhodes and Cos did not long enjoy their freedom; for Mausolus, king of Caria, subjected them to his dominion. His wife Artemisia is celebrated for the honours she paid to his ashes. The different accounts given of her by historians, afford ample room for criticism; for while some describe her as immersed in the deepest sorrow, others represent her as gaining victories at the head of her army. A great deal of time would be lost in examining such details, where, perhaps, more falsehood than truth has been admitted.

Evagoras and Nicocles.

Not to lose sight of the general thread of affairs, to which our studies principally relate, I have passed over a great many useless particulars. Evagoras and Nicocles, kings of Salamis in Cyprus, who were celebrated by Isocrates, upon whom Nicocles had bestowed many favours, were unquestionably valuable princes, but would scarcely have been known, had it not been for that orator's rhetoric. The court of Persia continued for a long time a scene of intrigues, revolutions, and crimes; but we shall see too many such spectacles in more interesting periods. Let us pass slightly over useless anecdotes of antiquity, which can only serve to retard us in our career. The names only of ancient history, which have been heaped up by modern writers, are an oppressive load upon the memory.

FOURTH EPOCH.

FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE REIGN OF PHILIP TILL THE ROMANS SUBDUED GREECE.

CHAPTER I.

THE REIGN OF PHILIP OF MACEDON TILL HIS POWER WAS ESTABLISHED IN GREECE.

A PRINCE of abilities, with a genius for war, was all that was wanting, to take advantage of the declining state of Greece, and bring the whole country under his dominion; and such a prince at this time made his appearance. We are about to see a monarchy, hitherto almost unknown, weak, despised, and so despicable as never once to have been governed by a man of eminent genius, imperceptibly raise itself to the very summit of worldly greatness. Though the kings of Macedonia alleged that they were the descendants of Hercules, the Greeks did not look upon them as a part of their nation, and treated them as barbarians. This kingdom had subsisted for more than four hundred years; yet it had almost always stood in need of the protection either of Sparta or Athens, and never once had any share of the glory gained by these republics. The example of Thebes has just proved to us, that the genius

Macedonia despised before the time of Philip.

of an individual is capable of bringing about the most important revolutions, when circumstances are favourable.

Before Christ, 360. Philip chosen king instead of his nephew.

After the death of Amyntas II. three hundred and seventy-five years before Christ, Macedonia was torn in pieces with calamities and dissentions. His son Perdiccas, who was the rightful heir, having fallen in the war against the Illyrians, Pausanias and Argeus contended for the throne of young Amyntas, the son of Perdiccas. At the time that Pelopidas came to settle the distractions of this kingdom, as we formerly mentioned, Philip, the brother of Perdiccas, was carried hostage to Thebes; but upon this occasion he fled to his own country, where he governed for some time as regent for his nephew, till the people chose him king, as they alleged that they had need of a man, and not a child, to restore their affairs.

He disciplines the Macedonians.

Philip, who was then twenty-four years old, and had been the pupil of Epaminondas, no sooner mounted the throne, than he showed himself worthy of wearing a crown. One of the first objects of his attention was to discipline his people, and to train them to the art of war; for which purpose he invented the phalanx. It was a body of six or seven thousand men drawn up sixteen deep, and armed with long pikes, in such proportion, that those of the last rank extended two feet beyond the first, so that the whole together presented an inaccessible and impenetrable front. His soldiers, whom he treated with kindness, calling them his companions, and setting them the example on all occasions, became so many heroes; and the claims of Pausanias and Argeus to the crown, were very soon relinquished.

His deep and artful policy.

Courage and military skill were not the only qualities by which Philip paved the way to his future greatness; to them, he added a well concerted policy, which was still more useful in promoting his schemes of ambition. He overreached the Athenians by his promises; and, having concluded a treaty with them, they very soon saw him take possession of Amphipolis, an Athenian colony, which he converted into a barrier between him and Greece. He speedily became desirous to govern, and to aggrandise himself; stratagems, corruption, the art of sowing dissentions, the making or breaking alliances as they happened to suit his purpose; skill in negotiating, or the employing of force when it was requisite, and indeed every method which genius could invent, lawful and unlawful, were equally employed to carry his point, and made the principal strength of King Philip.

He discovered gold mines in Macedonia, which brought him a yearly revenue of more than a thousand talents; and these he employed as the chief instrument of his policy, every where purchasing associates, or bribing traitors. 'No fortification,' said he, 'is impregnable, provided a mule loaded with money can find admittance into it.' If the oracle of Delphos replied to him, as Suidas relates, *Fight with money, and you will surmount every difficulty;* certainly it was an answer not dictated by justice.

The Abbé Mably observes, 'That the generality of undertakings fail from no cause so common, as that of their being begun to be executed the instant that the design is conceived, and, as obstructions have not been foreseen, no preparations can have been made to surmount them; therefore, being in no

condition to resist the first accidents which happen, the projectors find themselves frequently overpowered, and, instead of being masters of the event, are compelled to yield to circumstances; for politics being as uncertain as fortune, there are no rules to serve for instruction.' We daily see this reflexion verified. Philip, while deliberating upon his designs, weighed the means against the obstructions, and, by uniting all the parts of his system, knew how to command fortune. If ambition had not been the spring of all his politics, men in power could not choose a better model.

Philip attacks the Olynthians.

He freed Thessalia from oppressive tyranny, and by that means secured a people to his interest, from whom he expected to derive very important services. The Thessalian cavalry added to his phalanx, gave him a great superiority; and to protect his own kingdom, he took possession of some towns in Thrace. Thinking that Olynthus, an Athenian colony, might be of great consequence to him, after having deceived the Olynthians, he laid siege to their city. They applied to the Athenians for assistance; but Philip, by means of his money, had secured some pensioners in the city, who were entirely devoted to his interest.

Before Christ, 347.

In the mean time, Demosthenes, his most formidable enemy, awakened some patriotic sentiments by the powers of his eloquence, and a few troops were sent to the assistance of the Olynthians; but they were insufficient, as was likewise a second party with which they were reinforced. Therefore, instead of mercenary troops, of whom the Olynthians complained, they sent them some Athenians, who unfortu-

nately succeeded no better than the others, and Olynthus was delivered to him by two traitors. Philip, though pleased with the treachery, despised its authors, who being insulted even by the Macedonians, complained to the king, and begged satisfaction; but instead of attending to their complaint, he gave them the following stinging reply. *What need have you to regard the discourse of a parcel of rustics, who know no better than to call every thing by its proper name?*

Demosthenes the declared enemy of Philip.

If Demosthenes had lived in better times, when his country was fired with that zeal for glory and noble enterprises which it had formerly shown, he probably would have raised some insurmountable obstacles to the progress of the ambitious Macedonian. A powerful, nervous, intrepid orator, he darted the thunder of his eloquence against his adversaries, firing his hearers with the same zeal with which himself was animated, while all the arguments of his opponents were levelled with the dust. Coming from him, the words glory, liberty and public good, had irresistible influence. Apprized of the intentions of Philip, he thought of nothing but how to thwart them, as his hatred against that monarch exceeded all bounds.

Athens was no longer capable of great attempts.

The Athenians were unhappily so greatly degenerated, that they could no longer be known for the same people. Love of liberty was lost in indolence and effeminacy. Crowds of venal wretches yielded to every kind of corruption. The magistracy and public employments were the rewards of contemptible and mean intrigues. Mercenary troops were employed in the room of her own citizens. The

people, become the sport of flattering declaimers, were satisfied, provided that pleasures and praises were lavished upon them, and the treasures of the state wasted in exhibiting public spectacles.

The theatre swallowed up the funds which should have supported the state.

Pericles, while he distributed in support of the games a thousand talents, which formerly used to be placed annually in reserve to answer the necessities of the state, at least excepted those times when the nation was engaged in a war; but Eubulus, the opponent of Demosthenes, obtained a law forbidding the distribution to be interrupted, under pain of death; so that, by a very extraordinary decree, the funds, which ought to have been dedicated to support the expense of carrying on war, became the support of trifling exhibitions. At two different times, Demosthenes made an indirect attack upon this horrid abuse, by proposing that commissioners should be appointed to inquire into the laws, and abolish all such as were found hurtful to the republic. Vain attempts! The Athenians wanted amusement; and the theatre was much more interesting to them than the good of their country. *

Imprudent politics of Demosthenes.

When a people are become so debased, such brave and steady efforts as were necessary to defeat Philip, were not to be expected; and the orator should have directed all his power to take the advantage of such conjunctures as seemed favourable; but more zealous than

* According to Plutarch (*de glor. Athen.*) the representation of some tragedies cost more money than it had done to defend Greece against the Persians. He exclaims loudly against the indiscretion, which sacrificed the good of the state to the pleasures of the theatre.

wise, he acted as if the same spirit still prevailed in Athens as in the time of Aristides and Themistocles; and we shall see the dismal consequences of his ardour. He had already shown himself a bad politician in the affair of Olynthus; for at the time that a decisive blow was wanted, he proposed to send only a body of two thousand men, to make some ineffectual incursions; which were more likely to provoke than to prevent a powerful enemy from doing whatever he pleased. Philip had already attempted to possess himself of Thermopylæ, the great pass into Greece; and at last an opportunity of establishing his power in that country presented itself.

Sacred war against the Phocians.

A war which was called the *Sacred War*, because it was carried on under a false pretence of religion mixed with fanaticism, had distracted Greece for about ten years. The Phocians, who lived in the neighbourhood of the Temple of Delphos, having ploughed up some lands consecrated to Apollo, who was worshipped there, the other people of the neighbourhood, either to revenge the cause of the deity, or to gratify their own animosity, instantly took up arms against them. Though the council of the Amphyctions condemned them as being guilty of sacrilege, they pretended to defend what they had done, by alleging that it was their right, and that they were authorized so to do by the oracle. Almost all Greece joined one party or the other; Sparta and Athens in favour of the Phocians; while Thebes and several others contended for the rights of the temple; and they fought most furiously. The Thebans put to death all the Phocians whom

Before Christ, 355.

they made prisoners, as execrable wretches who had been guilty of the grossest profanity; and the Phocians, in their turn, sacrificed the Theban prisoners to their revenge. Philip, as a bystander, looked with complacency upon a division so favourable to his schemes, and saw the inveteracy of this mutual hatred with secret satisfaction. The more the Greeks weakened themselves by their domestic quarrels, he reckoned himself the more secure of making an easy conquest; and, by appearing neuter, hoped to take advantage of the dispute.

Philip declares himself, and deceives the Athenians.

The Thebans, finding themselves too weak to contend against their enemies, at last sued to Philip for protection, and he gladly took the opportunity to declare himself. The Athenians, heartily tired of the Thracian war, sent an embassy to him on purpose to negotiate a peace; but he bribed the ambassadors, and took their towns while they were amusing themselves upon the road; and when his conquests were completed, he signed the treaty. He refused to admit the Phocians, whose sacrilege afforded him a specious pretence for his invasion; and, arriving in a little time at Thermopylæ, took possession of that passage without opposition, and immediately entered Phocis; upon which the Phocians, hitherto unconquerable, laid down their arms; and he brought the sacred war to an end, without fighting; by this means gaining the reputation of being a religious prince, which was a character he was very solicitous to obtain, that it might promote his future purposes.

Before Christ, 346.

When the council of the Amphyctions was assembled, he dictated a sentence to them which

commanded, that every town in Phocis should be destroyed, and all who were guilty of sacrilege proscribed. The Phocians were excluded from making a part of the council of Amphyctions; and he required that he might be substituted in their place. Besides the advantage of being admitted into the council, he procured the management of the Pythian games, which was taken from the Corinthians, on pretence of their having assisted those who were guilty of sacrilege. Never did prince know better how to turn the superstition of the vulgar to his own advantage. There had been formerly a first *sacred war*, undertaken by the Spartans, with a design of taking the care of the temple of Delphos from the Phocians, and giving it to the Delphians. But Pericles restored the privilege to the Phocians; and, as fanaticism had no share in the contest, the war did no great harm,

Ancient sacred war,

CHAPTER II.

THE END OF THE REIGN OF PHILIP OF MACEDON,

PHILIP was no longer a stranger among the Greeks, but, in quality of Amphyction, was become one of their body. They had already begun to respect and obey him, and opinion went a great way to smooth the road for his new schemes; so that, by intrigue and force of arms, he could very soon have accomplished his

Philip concerts new schemes,

purposes. But still this able prince thought proper to dissemble, for fear of alarming them with suspicions, and startling the minds of the people at the very instant when it was of the greatest consequence to conciliate them. He returned to Macedonia, not to watch opportunities, but to prepare for gaining new conquests. He carried his arms into Illyria, Thrace, and Chersonesus; and, in proportion as he grew stronger, proceeded more boldly, taking possession of a part of the Isle of Eubea or Negropont, which he called *the fetters of Greece*, because its coast was very near the continent.

Philippics of Demosthenes.

Demosthenes thundered against him; and his *Philippics* began to rouse the Athenians. However, Philip did not desist from laying siege to Perinthus and Byzantium, with a view of starving Athens, which depended upon Thrace for the greatest part of its provisions.

Philip reproaches the Athenians.

At the same time the king of Macedonia, in a very eloquent letter, attempted to persuade them, that he had the most religious regard for treaties, while they on their part did not hesitate to violate them; and particularly reproached the Athenians with having solicited the king of Persia to join against him. 'Your fathers,' said he, 'upbraided the son of Pisistratus with having called in the Persians to fight against the Greeks, as an unpardonable offence; but you yourselves do not blush to commit the same crime which you always condemned in your tyrants.' It is certain that Demosthenes persuaded them to take this step, and did not cease to inveigh against Philip till the Athenians took up arms. He assured them of victory, and the total destruction of their enemy;

Demosthenes makes them take up arms.

but their general Chares, whom they sent to the assistance of Byzantium and Perinthus, having been unsuccessful, and the allies unwilling to receive him, from an idea that he was a man of a bad character, a rapacious voluptuary, not worthy of the command, they appointed the illustrious Phocion to be his successor. The Athenians showed themselves a very different people under a commander who was equally conspicuous for his many virtues, and his skill as a great warrior; and Philip had the prudence to withdraw his army; upon which the Perinthians, Byzantines, and the people of Chersonesus, gave a remarkable proof of their gratitude, by decreeing crowns of gold to the Athenians.

Phocion, a disciple of Plato, a true philosopher both in practice and principle, in whom every valuable talent and virtue were united, deserved to he ranked among the first of the Grecian heroes. His laconic eloquence, where every word, if we may use the expression, was an argument, frequently defeated Demosthenes, whose hazardous politics he by no means approved. That orator called him *the axe of his orations*. Though an enemy to war, because he saw into the consequences, he was chosen forty-five times to the command of the army, which is a sufficient proof of the confidence the people had in his zeal and abilities. However, his rigid probity seemed to censure the Athenian manners; and, far from ever flattering the people, he almost always opposed their sentiments. He was so convinced of the giddy weakness of the Athenians, that one day when he was delivering an oration universally applauded by the people, he said to one of his friends who

Phocion.

stood by him, *Pray, have I not let slip some silly expression?*

His politics superior to those of Demosthenes.

As all Phocion's desires centered in the good of his country, he constantly advised them to seek peace; though, in time of war, the Athenians were obliged always to apply to him to command their army. Demosthenes, bold in the council, but a coward in the field, continually endeavoured to kindle the flames of war, by persuading the people that upon it depended the safety and honour of their country. By their characters we may judge which of the two was most deserving of the people's confidence; but facts are surer grounds for our decision. Ought Tourreil, whom Rollin has followed, to have taken the Orations of Demosthenes for the foundation of his beautiful historical preface? We might as well approve of a judge deciding a cause, from the pleading of one party.

New religious war in Phocis.

A real or supposed sacrilege committed by the Locrians of Amphissa, who were accused of having cultivated some of the sacred lands belonging to the temple of Delphos, rekindled the war upon a religious pretence. Philip was desirous of being chosen general of the Greeks, to act against the violators and their associates, and the diligence of his pensioners accomplished his purpose. The council of the Amphyctions could not have promoted his views better, than by appointing him to the command. He very soon entered Greece, and took Elatea, the most considerable place in the country of Phocis, seeming by this conquest to threaten Thebes; at least it appeared so to Demosthenes, who instantly fired the minds of the

Athenians with the same ideas, and persuaded them to propose an alliance with the Thebans, who were their enemies, and the allies of Philip. Demosthenes being appointed ambassador, repaired immediately to Thebes, where, notwithstanding the eloquence of Python, Philip's ambassador, he infused his own enthusiasm into the Thebans, and formed a league with them against the Macedonians. It was upon this occasion that Phocion made the following answer to a passionate person, who asked him if he still dared to mention peace. *Yes, I dare; nevertheless, I know that you will obey me during the war, and I shall obey you in time of peace.* Demosthenes congratulated himself on his success in this negociation, because he thought that an alliance with Thebes would prevent Attica from being the seat of the war. *But we should rather think of the means by which we can secure a victory*, said Phocion wisely, *than on the place where we are to engage. It is that which must keep the war at a distance from us; for if we are defeated, misfortune will reach to the gates of the city.*

Reason was no longer attended to; and an incredible eagerness scarcely left them a moment to reflect upon the danger of their situation. Some unfavourable oracles were mentioned in vain; for Demosthenes turned them into ridicule, by saying that Pythia *Philippised.* The Athenians hastened their departure, and were joined by the Thebans. Philip, after having fruitlessly made an offer of peace, penetrated into Bœotia; and, with forces nearly equal, they came to an engagement in the neighbourhood of Chæronæa. The *sacred band*

Before Christ, 338. Battle of Chæronæa gained by Philip.

of Thebes was broken by Alexander, who, though he was not more than seventeen years of age, had, upon several occasions, shown that he was the worthy son of his father. One of the Athenian generals, in his turn, penetrated through a body of troops of the Macedonian army, and pursued as if the battle had been already gained. At sight of this imprudence, Philip said, *The Athenians do not know how to conquer;* and, bringing up his phalanx against that part of the army which was already in disorder, defeated them, and gained a decisive victory. To save himself, Demosthenes threw away his arms. Upon this occasion Phocion had been excluded from the command, and the Athenians were guilty of a double error. The first was, their not having availed themselves of his advice; and the second, the depriving themselves of the advantage of his abilities in the field; but, however, he inspired them with spirit to encounter their misfortune.

He behaves with moderation on his victory.

It is said that Philip, heated with wine, and intoxicated with success, by way of insult, sung the first words of the decree which Demosthenes obtained against him. It is likewise reported, that the orator Demades, being one of his prisoners, said to him with a generous freedom, *Since fortune has given you the part of Agamemnon, are you not ashamed to play that of Thersites?* and that the conqueror was not displeased with the freedom of Demades. This instance of moderation was not so honourable for him as the generous manner in which he behaved to his vanquished enemies. He dismissed the Athenian prisoners without ransom, and renewed his former treaty with the repub-

lic; a most noble reply to the insults which had been vomited against him by their orators! He granted peace to the Bœotians, but upon condition that he should have a garrison of Macedonians left in Thebes; all parties being made sensible, that if he was a dangerous politician, he was no barbarian. Would these republicans, in a similar situation, have given such proofs of prudence and humanity?

Suit between Demosthenes and Eschines.

The Athenians, according to their usual fickleness, gave themselves up once more to the orator, who had already led them into the greatest danger. They intrusted Demosthenes with the care of having the walls rebuilt, and to procure the necessary supply of provisions, decreeing a crown of gold to him, as the reward of his labours; which occasioned his famous controversy with Eschines. Their pleadings are well known by all the lovers of eloquence; and the manner in which Demosthenes vindicated the last war, is highly worthy of admiration. *No, Athenians,* cried he, *No, you have not transgressed by exposing yourselves for the safety and liberties of Greece. I swear it by our ancestors, by those brave warriors who fought at Marathon, Platea, Salamis, and Artemisium, and by many other heroes whose ashes lie buried in the public monuments.* Nothing was wanting, but to make the Athenians worthy of such ancestors; but Phocion had abundant room for saying, *I will recommend to you to go to war, when I find you capable of supporting a war; when I see your young men filled with courage, and at the same time obedient; the rich cheerfully contributing to the necessities of the state; and the orators no longer pillaging the public.*

Philip resolves to carry on war against the Persians.

Philip having become, what he had long wished, the umpire of Greece, either with a view of preserving that power, or extending his conquests, or to render his name immortal, by a most glorious enterprise, which was well calculated to dispel all hatred and prejudice, resolved to turn his arms against the King of Persia, whose throne he expected at least to *shake*, if it could not be overturned; and he procured himself to be appointed generalissimo of the Greeks to carry on the expedition. He consulted the oracle, and, as usual, received an ambiguous reply, which could be made to answer any event. *The bull is already crowned; his end draws nigh, and he will soon be sacrificed.* He believed, or rather he persuaded his army to believe, that the deity promised him success; and that nothing might intervene to interrupt his conquests, he made haste to give away his daughter Cleopatra; but the length of his days was determined. He was publicly assassinated during the marriage festivals by Pausanias, a young nobleman, who had been brutally affronted by Attalus uncle of Cleopatra, and to whom the king had refused to do justice. Philip fell the victim of that vengeance, after a reign of twenty-four years, and in the forty-eighth of his age.

Before Christ, 336. Philip assassinated.

Demosthenes and the Athenians express their joy indecently.

Demosthenes being privately informed of his death, hastened to the council, pretending that he had had a mysterious dream, which foreboded some extraordinary good fortune to the republic. As soon as the news was spread abroad, indecent expressions of satisfaction broke forth all over the city, of which the orator set the example, though his own daughter had

been but a few days dead. He caused sacrifices of thanks to be offered up to the gods, and a crown to be decreed to Pausanias, the murderer of Philip. Such a mean proceeding sufficiently displays the character of Demosthenes. Those excellent maxims, of which he made such parade in the orator's chair, were not so much the expression of his own sentiments, as the springs by which he obtained the gratification of his passions.

Character of Philip.

History upbraids Philip with being guilty of vices unworthy a man of honour, such as intemperance, debauchery, and treachery. He said, *That children are to be amused with toys, and men with oaths;* an expression which was likewise attributed to Lysander. Interest was the mainspring of all his actions; and it is certain, that no one ever exceeded him in employing all the subtilties of an artful policy for accomplishing his purposes; but if he had not been possessed of very eminent abilities, he never could have succeeded: so that if there is room to censure him, there is likewise an ample field for our admiration. The extent of his genius, the resources of his prudence, his intrepid courage, that justice and humanity, of which he often gave most eminent proofs, all together conspire to show him the pupil of Epaminondas.

His attention to the education of his son Alexander.

He had experienced the advantages of a good education too well, to let him be inattentive in procuring the same for a son, who was born with the happiest dispositions. He considered the character of being a great warrior only in a subordinate rank, and wished to store his mind with the most profound knowledge. A-

ristotle, the greatest philosopher of the age, was to be the instructor of Alexander; and Philip thought himself happy when that prince was born, if he could secure for him such a master. The letter which he wrote to the philosopher, may serve as a lesson to crowned heads. *I have a son, for whom I am not so thankful to the gods, as for their having given him to me in the time of Aristotle. I flatter myself with the hope of your making him worthy to succeed me, and to reign in Macedonia.* Alexander was the son of Olympias, who was afterwards divorced; and when the other sons of Philip were one day questioning his right to the succession, he received the following advice from his father. *Have patience, my son, and conduct yourself in such a manner before your brothers, that it may seem that the crown descends to you, rather on account of your own merit, than from my choice.*

His letter to Aristotle.

Among the great number of extraordinary anecdotes which are related of Philip, the following are the most worthy of being remembered. One of his domestics, every morning before he gave audience, repeated to him: *Remember, Sir, that you are mortal.* Knowing the value of truth, even when his vanity was hurt by it, he said that he was much obliged to the Athenian orators, who, by their abuse, had taught him to correct his errors. A prisoner, who was just going to be sold, having boldly reproached him, *Let that man be set at liberty*, said he, *I did not know that he was one of my friends.*

His love of truth.

When he was desired to dismiss from his service a worthy man who had censured him; *Let us examine first*, said he, *whether we have*

His moderation.

not given him reason for upbraiding us. This bold censurer was poor, and Philip relieved his wants, when his reproaches were immediately converted into praise; upon which, Philip very judiciously observed, *That it depended upon princes themselves, whether they were loved or hated;* and I will readily add, that, to make themselves beloved, is of all things the most easy.

His justice.

A woman, against whom he had given a decision at his leaving a feast, cried out that she appealed *to Philip fasting;* he inquired into the affair anew, and made amends for his former injustice. Another woman, of a low rank in life, having been put off from day to day, on pretence that he had not leisure to give her audience, at last bid him, *Cease then to be king.* He immediately gratified her, and from that time forward was more attentive to the first duty of royalty.

Unjust contempt with which Demosthenes spoke of him.

This was the prince of whom Demosthenes spoke in such degrading language.* 'Where is that indignation, said he, which used to break out against Philip, who, far from being a Greek, or having any connexion with Greeks, even far from being of illustrious descent among the barbarians, is only a wretched Macedonian, native of a country from whence we have never seen even a good slave?' Here we have a singular instance of Athenian vanity. Philip showed himself greatly superior, when, laughing at the absurd custom of choosing ten generals annually, he said, *I have not*

* IV. Philippic.

been able, in the whole of my life, to find more than one general, Parmenio; *but the Athenians can easily find ten every year.*

CHAPTER III.

REIGN OF ALEXANDER TILL THE BATTLE OF ARBELA.

Alexander very promising in his youth.

AN Alexander was wanted to occupy the place of Philip; and every action of his youth had already announced that greatness which he was afterwards to attain. The instructions of his father, added to the lessons of Aristotle,* formed his mind to politics, to war, philosophy, and learning. His taste for the Iliad of Homer was worthy of a hero. His love of glory did not prevent him from distinguishing what was most worthy of his pursuit; and when his friends asked him, if he would not contend for the prize at the Olympic games, he replied that he would, if he could have kings for antagonists. Nothing can give a better idea of his character, than the conversation which he had one day with the ambassadors of the King of Persia.

His love of glory.

His discourse with the Persian ambassadors.

Instead of questioning them about the wonders of Asiatic magnificence, which was a sub-

* He said, *That he was indebted to the one for life, and to the other for teaching him how to live properly.* This was not a sufficient acknowledgment of what he owed to his father; but he was jealous of Philip's glory, and remembered his being divorced from his mother Olympias.

ject for the curiosity of numbers of people already advanced to maturity, he inquired the particulars of the road which led into Upper Asia, the distance of the places, the strength of the nation, the nature of the government, and the conduct of their monarch. It is reported, that the astonished ambassadors said to one another, *This young prince is a great man; ours is a rich one.* Men of observation could foresee, by such inquiries, what sort of undertakings he would engage in, and to what pitch of greatness he would arrive.

His ambition.

He did not endeavour to conceal that ambition with which he was imbued. On receiving the news of some important action or exploit performed by Philip, *My father*, said he to his friends, *will take every thing, and leave nothing to be done by us.* Such men, according to the use they make of their talents and power, become either an honour or a scourge to mankind.

Before Christ, 336. Is despised, but makes himself formidable.

When Alexander ascended the throne at twenty years of age, all the nations whom his father had brought under subjection, thought they had regained their liberty. The barbarians immediately took up arms. Demosthenes, who was better skilled in the arts of persuasion, than in judging of the characters of men, stirred up the Greeks to unite against *a child, a simpleton*, these were his expressions, whose weakness exposed his own kingdom to imminent danger. The Macedonians, dismayed at these preparations, advised the young prince to try to ward off the blow by methods of insinuating gentleness; but he thought it

was better to destroy his enemies by a spirited blow. The Triballi, the Illyrians, the Thracians, the Getæ, and some other barbarians, suffered for their audacious indiscretion; and when he had given such proofs of his steadiness and courage, he fell with a heavy hand upon the Greeks.

Destroys Thebes.

A part of the Macedonian garrison which was left in Thebes, having been massacred by the Thebans, he sat down with his army before the city, offering pardon to the inhabitants upon condition that they would deliver up the guilty; but unluckily they were obstinate, and, being defeated, he took their town, and abandoned it to be pillaged and destroyed by his soldiers. He saved the priests, and the descendants of poet Pindar; but about thirty thousand inhabitants were sold to slavery. Such was his punishment for rebellion.

Remarkable instance of female courage.

A Theban lady, whose name was Timoclea, having been violated by a captain of Alexander's army, she showed him a well, into which, she said, she had thrown her money and jewels. When he came near it, this courageous woman pushed him in headlong, and buried him under a heap of stones which she threw upon him. Alexander, being informed of what had happened, far from punishing her, immediately set her at liberty.

He pardons the Athenians.

The Athenians, terrified at such severity, sent to sue for peace, and Demosthenes was chosen one of the embassy; but being seized with fear while upon the road, he withdrew from his colleagues. What a contrast between his language and sentiments! Alexander at

first insisted, that ten of the most remarkable orators who had shown the greatest zeal against him, should be delivered up to him, but he was satisfied with the banishment of Charidemus; showing as remarkable a proof of clemency to Athens, as he had of severity to Thebes.

Is declared general of the Greeks.

Having in one campaign made himself master of all Greece, he assembled the deputies of the towns at Corinth, and proposed to them to subdue the Persian empire, for which purpose, he got himself appointed general, which was as much as Philip could accomplish in the whole of his reign. The principal citizens, and even the philosophers, waited upon him with their congratulations; but Diogenes not appearing, he was desirous to go and see this extraordinary man, who seemed to look with contempt upon whatever others were desirous to value. He was witness of that haughty independence, which the philosopher affected, though beset with poverty, and could not help exclaiming, *If I was not Alexander, I would wish to be Diogenes.*

He visits Diogenes.

Preparations for his expedition into Persia.

At his return to Macedonia, he hastened his preparations, and then set out, refusing to marry, lest time should be wasted in the celebration of his nuptials. He was very liberal of his presents to those officers whose attachment to him was of importance. One of them having asked him, what he intended to reserve to himself, he replied, *Hope.* Antipater, with thirteen thousand men, was intrusted with the care of Macedonia, while his own army consisted only of thirty-five thousand; but they were excellent troops, and com-

manded by his oldest and best officers. When he set out, the whole of his funds for carrying on this expedition amounted only to seventy talents, and provisions for one month.

Rashness of this enterprise.

According to all the rules of prudence, it was exceedingly rash to attempt the conquest of Asia with such slender means. One adverse stroke might have occasioned the loss of Macedonia; but Alexander depended upon his own good fortune, and the incapacity of the prince, whose crown he wanted to seize, on pretence of being revenged on the Persians for the many insults they had offered the Greeks.

State of the Persian empire.

The empire of Cyrus for a long time had been threatened with ruin. Its excessive grandeur was a leading cause of its destruction. The errors of their mode of government, the slavery of the people, and the depravity of their princes, all together contributed to hasten its fall. The Satraps or governors of provinces, were at too great a distance from the court, and lived like so many independent kings. A great multitude of nations, who had nothing in common but slavery, formed one great body, but without any union, and were ever ready to fall in pieces. Their great king was nothing but an effeminate despot, whose court was filled with every species of wickedness.

Before Christ, 361. Ochus the tyrant assassinated.

After the death of Artaxerxes Mnemon, his son and successor Ochus, stained with the blood of two brothers, caused his sister Ocha, whose daughter he married, to be buried alive; and his insatiable rage had been employed against all the eminent men of his

kingdom. Phenicia and Egypt revolted. Sidon was burnt by its own inhabitants. Egypt being subdued, suffered most enormous barbarities; her deities were insulted, and the archives of the kingdom carried off from the temples. Bagoas, an Egyptian eunuch, having become the minister and confidant of Ochus, some time afterwards revenged his country by murdering the tyrant. Arses, one of the king's sons, succeeded; but the eunuch likewise caused him soon to be assassinated.

In the room of Arses, he placed upon the throne Darius Codomannus, a prince of the royal family, whom he also would have assassinated; but Darius defeated his intentions, by inflicting on him the punishment he deserved. This monarch was possessed of some good qualities, but was deficient both in politics and resolution. His errors contributed very much to the success of Alexander; but there are fatal circumstances when mistakes seem inevitable, even to men of eminent abilities. Before Christ, 336. Darius Codomannus.

Alexander passed the Hellespont, and, having arrived in Phrygia, paid his respects at the tomb of Achilles, whom he declared that he envied for having a faithful friend during his life, and an excellent poet to sing his praises after death. Filled with that enthusiasm which the fame of great men always inspires, he passed the Granicus in presence of the Persian army, and put them to flight. Beside that this dangerous action suited the impetuosity of his temper, he thought it was necessary to strike a bold stroke, to intimidate the Persians. He knew that success frequently depended Before Christ, 334. Alexander in Asia.

upon opinion, and that the very first step was often decisive.

Advice of Memnon not followed by the Persians.

If the Persians had been advised by Memnon of Rhodes, who was the best general in the army of Darius, they would have avoided an engagement, and, by laying waste the country, must have starved the Greeks, who were already in want of provisions; but the satrap of Phrygia opposed this opinion, lest the lands of his own province should suffer; and if it had not been for him, Alexander must have been infallibly ruined. Upon what trifles the fate of empires often depends! The opinion of an individual may either save, or bring them to destruction. In the next place, Memnon advised his master to carry the war into Macedonia, that Alexander might be compelled to return for the protection of his own country; which was a very judicious plan, especially as Sparta and the other Grecian states wished for the ruin of the Macedonian prince. Darius approved of the advice, and intrusted Memnon himself with the execution of his project; but that general having fallen at the siege of Mytilene, the only means which remained of averting the storm was relinquished.

Tarsus taken by Alexander.

Though Memnon defended Miletus and Halicarnassus, Asia Minor had already yielded. Alexander sent home the greatest part of his fleet, either on account of the very great expense, or to show his soldiers that they must conquer or die: And his rapid progress vindicated the boldness of this measure. Returning towards Tarsus by way of Cappadocia, he passed through the narrow defiles of Cilicia, which the enemy, not daring to wait

his approach, had already abandoned. He took possession of the riches of Tarsus before they were consumed, to which they were exposed by the Persians having set fire to the city.

It was here that he was seized with a violent disorder, which he brought upon himself, by bathing in the river Cydnus, while he was covered with sweat, and of which he was cured by his physician Philip. Parmenio wrote to him, that his physician had been bribed, and agreed to poison him. The information was not true, but it might have thrown his mind into a dangerous agitation. He showed the letter to Philip, and at the same instant swallowed a medicine, which he had presented to him. *The only favour that I have to beg of you*, said the physician, *is not to be uneasy, and your cure will be my justification.* Alexander must have been destroyed, if his mind had not been unshaken. Fear or distrust would have killed him, but he was preserved by his steady uniform courage. His illness and strength of mind.

Darius, instead of waiting the Greeks, as he was advised, in the great plains of Assyria, where the whole of his troops might have acted, imprudently advanced to give battle to Alexander; and, entering Cilicia by the pass of Amanus, entangled himself in a defile, where the greatest part of his army could not be brought into action. No despot can endure to hearken to any advice which mortifies his pride; and Charidemus, an Athenian who had fled for shelter into Persia, was put to death for having given one which ought to have been followed. But the battle of Issus very soon humbled the Before Christ, 332. Imprudence of Darius. Battle of Issus.

presumption of the great king, who was taught to his cost, that an innumerable army, badly disciplined, and still worse conducted, can avail nothing against excellent troops led by a hero. Thirty thousand Greeks, whom he had in his pay, were all that could contend for the victory; but Alexander broke through them, after having dispersed the rest of his army. Darius showed at least personal courage upon this occasion, and did not turn to fly till he saw the horses of his chariot were wounded. His loss is said to have amounted to a hundred and ten thousand men; while Quintus Curtius reduces that of the Macedonians to four hundred and fifty.

Observations on the historians of Alexander. Quintus Curtius.

We ought to take notice in this place, how little credit is due to this elegant author, whose descriptions and studied harangues are sufficient to create distrust, being much more the language of romance than of history. Besides this essential imperfection, there are a number of palpable blunders to be found in his book. For example, when he describes the splendid march of the army of Darius, which might be mistaken for a festival, he introduces a chariot consecrated to Jupiter, and ornamented with statues representing the gods; as if the Persians had known Jupiter, or not held idolatry in utter detestation. It is very extraordinary, that Rollin should have followed Quintus Curtius in such an enlightened age, and in a work intended to convey the most serious instruction.

Arrian.

Among the many contradictory accounts, which have been given by the different authors who have written the history of Alexander, Arrian is the most deserving of our esteem, even

if we did not know that he has followed the authorities of Ptolemy and Aristobulus, who were officers in Alexander's army. He acquaints us with the visit which the conqueror paid to the princesses who were his prisoners, and of the mistake of Sysigambis, who threw herself at the feet of Hephestion, whom she took to be Alexander, with the fine expression of the king upon the occasion. *No, mother*, said he, *you are not mistaken, for he is likewise Alexander*. But without asserting it for a fact, like other historians, he is satisfied with saying, 'There is such a dignity in the expression, that if we cannot believe it, we at least ought to wish it to be true.' Arrian makes no mention of Abdolonymus, whom Alexander took out of his garden to make him king of Sidon. Could such a remarkable event escape his notice? His silence serves as a negative proof, and the more to be depended on, that the authors who take notice of the story contradict one another. However, the expression which Quintus Curtius has put in the mouth of Abdolonymus, is not the less instructive. Alexander having asked him with what degree of patience he suffered want, *I wish to the gods*, said he, *that I may be able to bear prosperity with the same equality of mind. These hands supplied all my wants. Possessing nothing, I had no unsatisfied desires.*

I must now return to our history, from which it is sometimes necessary to withdraw for a few moments, that we may avoid those errors to which we are exposed by historians whose writings are filled with falsehoods. After the battle of Issus, Alexander passed into Syria,

Treasures of Darius taken at Damascus.

and Parmenio took possession of Damascus, where Darius kept his treasures. It has been said that a booty was found there, sufficient to load seven thousand beasts of burden; and that there were likewise in the same place three hundred and twenty-nine concubines belonging to the king of Persia, and four hundred and ninety-two attendants, destined to minister to his luxury and pleasures; a train sufficient of itself to make us expect a defeat. Darius wrote a haughty letter to the conqueror to demand his mother, his wife, and his children, and to advise him to put an end to an iniquitous war. The answer, which is related very differently by Arrian and Quintus Curtius, breathes the language of a haughty conqueror. Alexander speaks in it as if he had been the sovereign of Asia, and insists upon being acknowledged as such.

Alexander marches to Tyre.

Instead of pursuing the enemy so as not to give him time to breathe, he directed his course towards Tyre, and desired to be admitted there, that he might offer a sacrifice to Hercules. The Tyrians, apprehensive of danger, shut their gates against him, at which he was so enraged, that he resolved to compel them; but he likewise had other motives to induce him to attempt this important project. He was desirous to make himself master of the sea, either with a view of subjecting Egypt, or to restrain the Greeks, whom he had reason to distrust; for he found ambassadors from Sparta, Athens, and Thebes, at Damascus, intrusted to negotiate a treaty with the Persians. The conqueror gave them much more uneasiness at this time than the king of Persia.

New Tyre, which was situated opposite to Old Tyre, seemed to be impregnable without a fleet; but Alexander, who never was repulsed by any obstacles, undertook to join the island to the continent by a causeway. The work was forwarded by infinite labour, but was destroyed by the Tyrians. The operations were renewed with fresh ardour, till the Sidonians and some other people whom Alexander treated with gentleness, at last found ships for carrying on the enterprise. Siege, and taking of Tyre.

He then hastened the siege, and all sorts of warlike instruments were employed by both parties, besiegers and besieged, equally signalizing their courage and abilities, till the place was taken by storm after seven months' resistance. About eight thousand Tyrians were put to death; thirty thousand prisoners were sold; and the conqueror offered up his sacrifice to Hercules upon the ruins of Tyre.

According to Josephus, the Jewish historian, he went next to Jerusalem, with an intention to use the people of that place as he had done those of Tyre, because they refused to supply him with provisions, upon pretence of the oath they had sworn to the king of Persia. Jaddus the chief priest went out to meet him, dressed in his pontifical habit, when Alexander, struck with his figure, prostrated himself to worship the name of God which he carried written upon a plate of gold; declaring, at the same time, that this same high priest had formerly appeared to him in a dream, and had promised him the conquest of Asia. Such a wonderful event should be confirmed by some other evidence. The Scriptures mention nothing of it, Account of Alexander's going to Jerusalem, by Josephus.

nor even profane history, which has given vent to abundance of other wonders.

Alexander in Egypt.

Alexander having taken the city of Gaza, which was nobly defended by Betis, entered Egypt, where he was received with every expression of joy and satisfaction; the Persians having made themselves detested by despising the religion of the country. He allowed the Egyptians to retain their own laws and customs, which was a very proper step to make them pleased with his holding the sovereign authority. A piece of vanity led him to the temple of Jupiter Ammon, across the scorching sands, where fifty thousand men of the army, commanded by Cambyses, had been buried. All the historians tell us, that he extricated himself by a kind of miracle. They say, that he was desirous to be thought the son of Jupiter, the Oracle having given him that title; for who dared to oppose him? But his mother Olympias wrote to him in raillery, not to set her and Juno by the ears. He founded the city of Alexandria in Egypt, which was an undertaking more worthy of a great man, and undoubtedly much more to his honour, than the sacrilegious flattery offered to him by the priest of Jupiter.

CHAPTER IV.

END OF THE REIGN OF ALEXANDER, HIS DEATH.

Alexander refuses the offers of Darius.

Success becomes a dreadful poison to the minds of men; and it produced very extraordinary effects upon a hero, who seemed to be in-

tended as an object of admiration for the world. Darius made an offer to Alexander by a second embassy, to give him ten thousand talents, and his daughter in marriage, with the whole country lying between the river Euphrates and the Hellespont. Prudence could not leave him a moment to hesitate. Parmenio said, that if he was Alexander, he would accept these offers: *And I too*, said the King, *if I were Parmenio.* He haughtily rejected them, and in his desire to obtain all, exposed himself to lose every thing. Quintus Curtius makes him say, that *the world cannot endure two suns, nor two masters;* but that is the language of a declaimer, who magnifies every thing to display himself to advantage.

Darius had time to assemble seven or eight hundred thousand men; and Alexander, always attended with success, passed the rivers Euphrates and Tigris without opposition, where he presented himself in the face of the enemy, placing his whole dependence upon the known valour of his troops. The advice which Parmenio gave him to attack the enemy in the night, must have lost him this advantage; but he replied with judgment, as well as greatness of mind, that it did not suit him to steal a victory. The famous battle of Arbela brought him to the very summit of prosperity. The left wing, where Parmenio commanded, was in danger; and the cavalry of Darius had begun to plunder the camp, when Alexander, who was successful on the other wing, sent orders to Parmenio not to be uneasy about his baggage, but to think only of conquering; which order had a wonderful effect; for he very soon gained

Before Christ, 331. Battle of Arbela.

a complete victory. Arrian reckons near three hundred thousand of the enemy killed in the field, and less than twelve hundred Macedonians. Though Darius had an infinite number of men, yet he had but few soldiers in his army, which was the cause of his misfortune. He showed no want of courage during the action, but was hurried along by his flying troops.

Death of Darius.

We cannot withhold our praise or compassion from that unfortunate prince who became the victim of another person's ambition. Generous and peaceable, he met with the fate which is due only to tyrants. After having passed a river in his flight, he refused to let the bridge be broken down, as he could not think of preserving his own life at the expense of the lives of so many of his subjects, who were exposed to the sword of the enemy. Being betrayed by Bessus, one of his satraps, he declined to trust his person to a guard of Grecians who were attached to him, lest it should be thought an affront to the Persians. Constantly pursued by Alexander, he was assassinated by Bessus; and, when dying, charged a Macedonian, if we may believe Plutarch, to thank his enemy for his behaviour to his mother, wife, and children.

The Macedonians debauched by their conquests.

Babylon, Susa, Persepolis and Ecbatan, had already fallen into the hands of the conqueror; and the immense riches which were found in these places very soon corrupted his army. The burning the palace of Xerxes at Persepolis, should be looked upon as a prelude to those excesses into which he was about to plunge himself. Arrian makes no mention of

Thais the courtesan, who, according to other historians, urged him to commit that horrid barbarity while he was engaged in a scene of debauchery.

Alexander's debauchery.

From this time forward, we can scarcely trace any of those virtuous sentiments of which he had given so many proofs. Debauchery, cruelty and ingratitude, tarnished all his glory; and he who formerly would have no cooks, but sobriety and exercise, now passed day and night in riots and feasting. He became fond of the luxury and ornaments of the Persian kings, which he had formerly despised; and scorned the dress and manners of the brave Macedonians, who had been the instruments by which he had gained so many victories. He desired that the people should adore him, and laid himself open to murmurings and rebellion.

Death of Parmenio and his son.

A conspiracy was formed against him in his camp, of which Philotas, the son of Parmenio, was informed; but believing it to be false, he neglected to mention it. However, he was put to death as a traitor; yet his real offence was wounding the pride of the king, by imprudent haughtiness. The illustrious Parmenio, who had been so highly esteemed by Philip, and without whom Alexander had done nothing of importance, was assassinated by order of the king, probably from an apprehension that he would revenge the death of his son. Such, however, was the esteem which the soldiers had for Alexander, that he disarmed the seditious by a single word.

New exploits.

He carried his conquests next into Bactriana and Sogdiana, where Bessus had assumed the

title of King, but was punished for his wickedness. The Scythians, notwithstanding their being reputed invincible, were likewise defeated. I must suppress an infinite number of particulars; and observe, that the ornaments with which they have been loaded by Quintus Curtius, degrade the dignity of history.

Murder of Clitus.

What is much more interesting to us, and may serve as an important lesson to mankind, is the affecting scene which the horrid murder of Clitus presents to our consideration. That old officer, beloved by Alexander, whom he had saved in battle, retained the haughty freedom of the old manners, which, having indulged too far at a festival, proved the occasion of his death. Alexander, heated with wine, and boasting of his exploits, so as to lessen those of his father Philip, Clitus so far forgot himself, as to offend the king by some expressions of contempt and indignation; and the haughty monarch killed him with a stroke of his javelin. Remorse and despair were the immediate consequences; but the courtiers found means to dispel them. A formal decree was passed, that the murder of Clitus was an act of justice; and from that time, liberty was almost annihilated in every heart.

Callisthenes punished for having spoken the truth.

However, the Macedonians did not debase themselves, like the other servile Greeks, so as to prostitute divine honours, by offering them to their king. One of the courtiers proposed that it should be done; upon which Callisthenes, a severe inflexible philosopher, in a discourse full of evident truths, refuted what had been urged by the courtier in its favour; but Alexander saw nothing in this but a spirit of

rebellion, and Callisthenes very soon felt the effects of his resentment. He was suspected of being concerned in a plot formed by Hermolaus, with whom he had an intimacy; and, without any proof having been adduced against him, was thrown into a dungeon, where he was put to death for an imaginary offence, leaving to the king eternal shame, for having been guilty of a premeditated act of injustice.

Before Christ, 327. Excessive ambition of Alexander.

If Alexander had been blessed with as much prudent policy as his father, he would have been more solicitous to have secured than to have extended his conquests, and would not have attempted any but what could have been preserved by human aid; but the more he was favoured by fortune, the more he gave himself up to the intoxication of his pride and vanity. The confines of the Persian monarchy seemed to him to be too limited; and, imagining that he ought to follow the steps of Bacchus and Hercules, he undertook to bring India under his dominion. The dangers to which he was exposed, can add very little to the ideas we have already formed of his valour. Taxiles, one of the kings of the country, came to meet him, and, according to Plutarch, addressed him in the following language. 'O Alexander, if you do not intend to deprive us of our food and our water, which are the only things for which reasonable people ought to take up arms, wherefore should we fight? As to what the world calls riches, if I have more than you, I am ready to give you a part; if I have less, I am willing to owe you a favour.' Alexander accepted his gifts, and loaded him with pre-

Speech of Taxiles.

sents, offering him, at the same time, his friendship and protection.

Porus conquered.

But Porus, another Indian king, more bold and haughty, prepared to repel the invasion of the conqueror, who, having crossed the Indus, arrived on the banks of the Hydaspes, where Porus, with a numerous army, was expecting him upon the opposite shore. He deceived the enemy by a stratagem; and, having happily passed over that large river, defeated the Indians, notwithstanding their elephants and the courage of their king, whom he ordered to be spared, because he had behaved like a hero. When Porus was brought into his presence, he asked him how he desired to be treated? *Like a King*, answered Porus. *From self-love, I agree to that*, replied Alexander. He kept his word, and thereby gained a faithful ally.

Alexander obliged to return, visits the ocean.

After undergoing immense fatigues, and succeeding in incredible exploits, his army refused to follow him any farther in unknown regions, and obliged him to return; he therefore embarked upon the Indus, that he *might see* the ocean. The ebbing and flowing of the sea terrified his pilots, who were unacquainted with that phenomenon: however, that he might boast of having penetrated into unheard-of places, he landed upon two little islands. This was all that he gained by his expedition into India.

Reflections upon his conquests.

If it is true, as has been reported, that Alexander exclaimed, while passing the Hydaspes, *O Athenians, will you believe that I expose myself to so many dangers only to deserve your praise?* if he had been desirous to outlive himself some time, that he might see the effect which the

reading of his history would have upon the minds of men, reason would have informed him, that he ought to have rendered his name immortal, by performing actions which deserved to be remembered, and to prefer solid glory to empty fame, which makes censure and praise equally immortal. Erostratus, to perpetuate his name, burnt the famous temple of Diana in Ephesus. Is not a conqueror, whose steps are marked with destruction, another Erostratus?

What he did on his return to Persia.

At his return to Persia, he endeavoured to remedy the disorders which had been occasioned by his absence. He punished some governors who had allowed themselves to be corrupted; he quelled the mutiny which he found among the troops; he married two princesses of the royal family; and, that he might unite the two nations, persuaded the Macedonians to form similar engagements. He once more went to the ocean by the river Eulæus. He projected new conquests, and formed schemes for invading other countries; but his end was drawing near. The death of his favourite Hephæstion,* who fell a sacrifice to drunkenness, did not make him either more sober or prudent; and at the age of thirty-three, he died from the same cause at Babylon. It is said, that when his officers asked him, who he desired should succeed him, he replied, *The most worthy;* adding, that he foresaw his funeral would be stained with blood. In effect,

Before Christ, 323. His death.

* *Hephæstion loves Alexander*, said that prince, *and Craterus loves the King.* Craterus was a worthy courtier, who retained the Macedonian manners, and had the true glory of his master at heart; he was therefore employed in all transactions with the Macedonians and Hephæstion, in whatever related to the Persians.

such extensive conquests only terminated in civil wars, and the inevitable destruction of an empire, much too large to be governed by one man.

Report of his being poisoned false.

The report of his having been poisoned, which was spread abroad some years after his death, was nothing more, as Plutarch observes, but the contrivance of some people, who thought *that this great drama should be suited with a tragical conclusion.* His disorder continued thirty days, of which a journal was extant. The same author takes notice, that he entered Babylon, looking with contempt upon some unlucky predictions by the Chaldeans; yet he was so affected with fears and superstition during his disorder, that the palace was soon filled with priests and soothsayers; so much are strong minds sometimes intimidated by danger.

Alexander corrupted by his passions.

The story of Alexander may serve as an important lesson to mankind in general, as well as to kings. They will see there the effects which a great flow of success could have upon a noble and generous soul, who must have been a model to future heroes, if he had not been contaminated with vice. The sudden transitions from good to bad, from prudence to folly, from moderation to violence, from glory to ignominy, must make every rational being tremble upon the brink of the abyss dug by the passions. The Macedonian hero very well deserved the answer which was made to him by the pirate, whom he asked, what right he had to infest the seas. *The same which you have to infest the whole world. I am called a robber, because I do it with one small ship; while you are called a conqueror, because you employ a great fleet.*

I ought not to conceal, that the celebrated Montesquieu has written a panegyric on Alexander. 'If it is true,' says he, 'that victory gave him every thing, it is equally true that he did every thing which could be done to obtain victory. At first, he trusted very little to chance; but when fortune had raised him superior to accidents, he sometimes tried what could be effected by a bold stroke. He resisted those who wished to treat the Greeks as masters, and the Persians as slaves. For his sole purpose was to unite the two nations, and to put an end to all distinction between the conquerors and the conquered. He assumed the Persian manners, that the Persians might not be grieved at being compelled to adopt those of the Greeks. In all his conquests, he seemed only to desire to be the particular king of every state, and the chief citizen of every city. Averse from private expense, he was always ready to supply the wants of the public. In his domestic economy, he was a Macedonian; but, in discharging the debts due to his soldiers, sharing his acquisitions with the Greeks, or advancing the fortune of every individual in his army, he was Alexander. He was guilty of two unworthy actions; he burnt Persepolis and slew Clitus; but his penitence was so remarkable, that, while we remember the respect he showed for virtue, we are willing to forget his offences.' *

Encomium of that prince by Montesquieu.

Whatever regard may be due to such respectable authority as that of Montesquieu, yet many of these notions seem to be less

He deserves more blame than praise.

* Esprit des Loix, liv. x. chap. 14.

solid than ingenious. Undoubtedly, Alexander had a most extensive capacity; but he was so led away by the violence of his ambition, that he was not capable of forming a plan for his future conduct. He was always successful; but often indebted to fortunate accidents, which could not have been expected except from unadvised rashness. He subdued the Persians, who had been prepared to submit to a new yoke, by the despotism of their own kings; but, notwithstanding the enthusiasm with which the Macedonians were inspired by his victories, their patience was at last exhausted. The number of cities which he founded in different countries, but more particularly that of Alexandria in Egypt, clearly demonstrate the greatness of his views; but the Abbé Mably observes, 'That these cities were looked upon by him as trophies which the Greeks were accustomed to erect in those places where they gained any signal victory.' His continence, and the respect with which he behaved to the family of Darius, entitle him, undoubtedly, to the highest reverence; but can we hesitate to declare, that the sequel of his life totally obscured the lustre of these virtues, which, in the early part of it, shone so conspicuous? To conclude, if he proposed to carry the war into Africa, Sicily, and Spain, after having conquered India almost to the banks of the Ganges, is not that sufficient authority for saying, that he did not know the bounds within which human enterprises should be limited?

Let us value things according to the advantages they procure. Let us praise Alexander for his intention of draining the marshes in the

country of Babylon, and digging a basin in the neighbourhood of the city fit to contain a numerous fleet. Let us praise him for his schemes intended to promote commerce and navigation; but let us at the same time acknowledge, that he did much more harm than good, not only to the people whom he subjected in the course of his conquests, but likewise to his own subjects, whom he left to feel all the dismal effects of civil discord. His empire was very soon divided, his family dispossessed and totally extinguished; so that he seems to have laboured solely to raise fortunes for his officers,

CHAPTER V.

DISTURBANCES IN ATHENS. DEATHS OF PHOCION AND DEMOSTHENES. DEMETRIUS PHALEREUS.

THOUGH Greece had been sunk into a kind of lethargy during the conquests of Alexander, yet some efforts were made to recover the liberty of the Grecian states. The Spartans stirred up a rebellion in Peloponnesus; but Antipater, who governed in Macedonia, extinguished this league by gaining a remarkable battle, which put an end to all hopes of the allies being able to shake off the yoke. Peloponnesian league. Before Christ, 330.

Some years after, Harpalus, governor of Babylon, being afraid that Alexander, at his return from India, would punish him for his iniquitous extortions, crossed the sea with five thou-

sand talents, and took shelter in Athens, where he employed his money to bribe the orators, whose venal souls were no longer influenced by any thing but interest; yet he found Phocion incorruptible. That great man, who, living with his wife in the bosom of poverty, did the common domestic offices in his own house, had already refused to accept a hundred talents, which were offered to him by Alexander; and when the ambassadors said to him, *He loves you as the only deserving man in the state. Let him then allow me to be so, and to appear such*, replied Phocion; far richer, in the eyes of the judicious Plutarch, by having sufficient strength of mind to refuse such a sum, than the prince who made him the offer.

Demosthenes bribed.

Demothenes, whose mercenary soul disgraced his abilities, could not withstand the offers of Harpalus; his prevarication roused the indignation of the people, and being condemned by the Areopagus, he was put in prison for payment of a fine which they imposed; but he made his escape, and showed great pusillanimity during the time he remained in exile. When Alexander approached in person to chastise the Athenians, they then thought proper to drive Harpalus out of their country.

Before Christ, 323. Conduct of the Athenians after the death of Alexander.

Notwithstanding their humiliation, the Athenians still retained that restless, petulant spirit, which had brought upon them such variety of misfortunes. They still sought to be free, without having either the courage or virtue which liberty requires. The least fit of passion was sufficient to make them instantly take up arms, and the slightest misfortune, to overwhelm them with fear. Their indiscretion was enough to

have completed their ruin. On the first report of Alexander's death, the Athenians immediately gave vent to their joy, and, imagining that they were delivered from the Macedonian yoke, nothing was to be heard but war and vengeance. The declaimers every where lighted up the flame, and the prudent Phocion fruitlessly attempted to check the violence of the conflagration. It was in vain for him to tell them, *If Alexander is this day dead, he will be so to-morrow, and likewise next day; we have time for prudent deliberation.* They would not listen to him, but sent deputies to persuade all the states of Greece to form a league against the Macedonians. Demosthenes, though still an exile, took the field, and stirred up Peloponnesus to revolt; upon which he was gloriously recalled from his banishment, loaded with honours, and the standard of war immediately set up.

Antipater reduces them.

Macedonia was so exhausted by the new levies that were sent to join Alexander, that Antipater had no more than about thirteen thousand fighting men. However, he advanced to attack the Greeks; but being defeated, was obliged to shut himself up in the city of Lamia* in Thessaly, till the generals who were in Asia could come to his relief. The first who came to his assistance was Leonatus, who was killed in an engagement where Leosthenes the Athenian general gained the victory. The people now began to rally Phocion, asking him if he would not have wished to have performed such noble deeds? *Yes*, replied he, *and to have advised the contrary.* He readily foresaw the con-

* From thence this was called the *Lamian war*.

sequence of their arrogant confidence, and asked, *When will there be an end of our conquests* In effect, this return of good fortune only served to make them more remiss in their discipline; and Antipater being joined by Craterus the allies, disheartened by the first misfortune abandoned the Athenians, that they might procure better terms for themselves; so that Athens was very soon obliged to submit, when Antipater abolished democracy, and restored the aristocratical government, putting a garrison in the port of Munychia, and obliging them to pay the whole expenses of the war.

Death of Demosthenes.

Demosthenes, whom they had agreed to deliver up, fled, from a dread of falling into the hands of Antipater, and swallowed poison. This famous orator overcame some very great natural obstacles, and attained the highest degree of eloquence, with which he for a long time governed his country; but can the fatal enthusiasm which he kindled by it, be put in comparison with the prudent policy of Phocion? When Rollin ascribes to him, *a wonderful sagacity, which pointed out to him future and distant events as if they had been present;* would it not be said, that the destruction of Philip and Alexander had verified his predictions? The Athenians erected a statue to him, with the following inscription: *Demosthenes, if thou hadst had power equal to thy judgment, the Macedonian Mars would never have ruled in Greece.* But the following would have been more proper, *If thy judgment had been equal to thy genius and eloquence.*

Rashness fatal to the Greeks.

A precipitate rashness was the ruin of that republic. It was an egregious folly to draw

upon themselves Alexander's generals, while they were still in perfect union, and accustomed to success. If the Athenians had waited till dissentions had sprung up among them, an opportunity might have offered of fighting to advantage, when the confederate states of Greece, united against enemies that were tearing one another in pieces, might have regained their freedom and independence. But when the moment arrived, in which they ought to have made the attempt, they found themselves destitute of all power.

Dissentions among the officers of Alexander.

The empire of Alexander became an immense theatre of war and different revolutions. His natural brother Arideus was acknowledged his successor, in conjunction with a son whom he had by his wife Roxana. Arideus was not capable of supporting the dignity of the crown, and ambition could not respect the rights of an infant. Perdiccas, to whom the regency and the royal signet were intrusted, excited the jealousy of the rest of the officers who formerly were his equals; and all engaged in schemes of aggrandizing themselves. Every one was desirous to become absolute in his own government, and to erect it into a separate state. Antigonus, governor of Lycia, Pamphylia, and the Greater Phrygia, more ambitious than the rest, was the first who attempted to disturb Perdiccas; for which purpose he engaged Antipater, Craterus, and Ptolemy, governor of Egypt, to join him. War being kindled, Perdiccas was assassinated in Egypt by his own officers. Ptolemy politically declined to accept of the regency, which might have exposed him to envy, without adding to his power; it there-

fore fell to Antipater, whose death occasioned fresh disturbances.

Polysperchon attempts to gain the Greeks.

Cassander, general of the horse, and son of Antipater, provoked at Polysperchon being preferred to him by his dying father, who had only associated him in the regency with that old officer, wanted to seize upon an authority by force, which he unjustly looked upon as his rightful patrimony; and therefore formed an association with Ptolemy, Antigonus, and Seleucus. Polysperchon hoped to attach the Grecians to his interest, by recalling the exiles from banishment, restoring the ancient government to the different cities, and reestablishing democracy in Athens. This decree revived the disturbances of that city, and the Athenians became guilty of a most enormous act of injustice.

Phocion unjustly accused.

Whatever could render a character valuable and respectable, ought to have made Phocion dear to the people of Athens; his old age, his virtues, the glory which he had acquired, and the services he had done the state; but he was a favourer of aristocracy, which alone could check popular madness; and that was sufficient cause for the declaimers to rail against him, and to allege that he was guilty of some offences against his country. The command of the army was taken from him upon suspicion. He was next accused of treason, and condemned in a riotous assembly. Being asked, according to custom, what punishment he thought he deserved, he asked for death, upon condition that the rest who were accused and suspected, yet innocent as he was, should be spared; but the whole were condemned to drink the hem-

His death.

lock. The only order which Phocion gave to his son, before he swallowed the poison, was to forget the injustice done to him by the Athenians. Such was the end of this great hero and eminent philosopher, who, in the highest degree, had united politics and a knowledge of the art of war to personal bravery and virtue; who had served his country till he was above eighty years of age, in her armies and in her councils, equalling Socrates in wisdom, while he excelled him by the importance of the offices which he held for the public good.

The probity of Phocion.

Since the principal merit of history is to present models for imitation, we shall mention two instances of his singular probity. His son-in-law, Charicles, having been summoned to answer an accusation against him for receiving money from Harpalus, he refused to plead in his favour, saying, *I made you my son-in-law, but it was for worthy actions.* Antipater, who loved and respected him, having made a proposal to him one day which was not very just, he boldly replied, *Antipater cannot find in me a friend and a flatterer.* The Athenians erected a statue to Phocion. That sort of memorial incessantly upbraided them with the remembrance of the insults which they had offered to virtue, yet never produced the least amendment.

Before Christ, 317. Cassander gives law to Athens.

While they were engaged in intestine dissentions, without once looking forward, or attempting to arrange the affairs of the public, Cassander seized the Piræus, and prescribed the terms upon which he granted them a peace. He placed a garrison in the citadel, and restored aristocracy, obliging them to elect one of

their own citizens to preside in the new government. They chose Demetrius Phalereus, a disciple of Theophrastus, a man of genius improved by learning, whose understanding and probity equally contributed to the good of the public. He governed them ten years with justice and moderation, insinuating himself into the favour of the people, yet without condescending to flatter them, and correcting abuses without their being exasperated. The revenue was increased, and the city ornamented with convenient buildings; for Demetrius, disapproving of the ostentatious expenses of Pericles, sought only what was truly useful, and to restrain every kind of luxury which contributed to cherish vanity and effeminacy.

Demetrius Phalereus.

His attention was principally directed to watch the morals of the people, upon which the happiness of society depends. His desire was, that of all things, the minds of youth should be formed to virtue, in preference of every other kind of merit; that they should reverence their parents when at home, and respect themselves when alone. Restrained by paternal authority, and ruled by those sentiments of honour which forbid their doing in secret what could make them blush in public, they must have become worthy of their ancestors, if laws could in a short time extirpate the vices of a corrupt people.

Reforms the morals of the people.

But Demetrius Poliorcetes, son of Antigonus, coming in a few years after to Athens, and declaring that he was sent by his father to deliver the Athenians, and restore democratical government, the whole face of affairs was very soon changed. He was received with every

Before Christ, 306. Demetrius Poliorcetes restores democracy.

demonstration of joy, the people lavishing upon him every kind of flattery, even so far as to call him *a preserving god.* Demetrius Phalereus became the object of their hatred, as much as if he had been a traitor or tyrant. They imputed to him as a crime, the having allowed a Macedonian garrison to keep possession of the citadel for ten years; which was a charge they had likewise brought against Phocion; but both the one and the other were obliged to submit to superior power, while at the same time they were persuaded that it served as a check to the turbulent spirit of the people. Historians say, that three hundred and sixty statues had been erected to Demetrius, but they were all thrown down upon this occasion.

He retired from Athens under the protection of Poliorcetes; and, being told of the insult which was offered to his statue, he said, *They cannot however destroy those merits which procured me the honour of having them erected.* Being condemned to suffer death for contumacy, he retired to Egypt, where he acquired the friendship of Ptolemy; and by his learned labours on moral and political subjects, acquired new honours, which helped to console him for the disgraces that were offered to him in Athens. His retreat.

CHAPTER VI.

WARS AMONG THE GENERALS OF ALEXANDER. DIVISION OF HIS EMPIRE. IRRUPTION OF THE *GAULS*.

Wars among Alexander's officers.

THE quarrels and wars which were entered into by the officers and successors of Alexander, present us with nothing but a long series of intrigues, battles and murders, such as are always to be met with in the history of every country; and therefore, it is unnecessary to do more than take a cursory view of the principal incidents. Olympias, the mother of Alexander, who had retired to Epirus, was recalled by Polysperchon, in hopes that she would support his cause. This merciless princess, offended at being divorced from Philip, revenged the affront, by murdering king Aridæus, his wife, and a number of the Macedonians; but Cassander flying to their assistance, *took* her prisoner, and caused her to be assassinated. Eumenes, governor of Cappadocia and Paphlagonia, who remained a steady adherent to the royal family, being delivered up to Antigonus by traitors, was put to death in prison. The young king, Alexander, son of the Conqueror, Roxana his mother, and his brother Hercules, were assassinated. Thus, the conquests of that most celebrated hero were terminated by the murder of his whole family, and the usurpation of his empire.

His family exterminated.

Before Christ, 301. Battle of Ipsus.

The fate of the different competitors was decided by the battle of Ipsus in Phrygia, in

which Antigonus was killed. Demetrius fled with the remains of his army, and the empire was divided among the conquerors. Egypt, Lybia, Arabia, Palestine, and Cœle-Syria, fell to Ptolemy; Macedonia and Greece to Cassander; Thrace, Bythinia, and some other provinces, to Lysimachus; and Seleucus had the rest of Asia, as far as the river Indus. This last kingdom, the most powerful of the four, is called the kingdom of Syria, because the city of Antioch, which was built in Syria by Seleucus, became the residence of his descendants.

Division of the empire.

Demetrius Poliorcetes, an imprudent warrior, having been deprived of all his possessions, after the defeat of his father Antigonus, flattered himself with the hope of finding some resource in Athenian gratitude; but they shut their gates against that *preserving god* whom they formerly adored; yet, when his affairs began to recover, Athens was obliged to receive him, though it had been prohibited, under pain of death, even to offer proposals of peace. The moderation with which he treated this treacherous people, deserves much higher praise than all his actions in war.

Behaviour of the Athenians to Poliorcetes.

Cassander died, after having reigned some time in Macedonia, where Polysperchon could not withstand him; and his two sons contended for the succession. One of them called Demetrius to his assistance, who slew him, and caused himself to be proclaimed king; but being dethroned by Pyrrhus and Lysimachus, he died of vexation and debauchery.*

* After having been driven by Agathocles, son of Lysimachus, out of Caria and Lycia, he fled for protection into the territories of his son-in-law Seleucus; which being refused, he for some time carried on a war

Famous siege of Rhodes.

He signalized himself chiefly at the famous siege of Rhodes, which lasted a year, and at last terminated by a treaty of peace. It is said, that the Rhodians received three hundred talents for the warlike instruments which were given to them by Demetrius, and that the money was employed in erecting the famous colossus of the sun, which was one hundred and fifty feet high, and thrown down, about sixty-six years after, by an earthquake. Protogenes the painter lived in the suburbs of Rhodes, and continued his profession during the siege, without showing any disquiet. Upon Demetrius appearing surprised at his boldness, *I know*, said he, *that you had declared war against the Rhodians, but not against the arts.* Demetrius was so pleased with this reply, that he immediately became his protector.

Protogenes the painter.

Ptolemy makes Egypt flourish.

Amidst the crimes of ambition, and the horrors of war, it is an affecting spectacle to behold the fine arts, learning, and science, exercising their gentle sway, and softening the hearts even of those in whose presence mankind trembled. At this time, Ptolemy Soter, the most valuable of all the successors of Alexander, encouraged men of abilities, and established the empire of reason in Egypt. It was to him that Alexandria owed the *Museum*, a kind of learned academy, which every day became more and more famous. He likewise founded, in the same place, the celebrated library, that immense treasure of learning, in

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with that prince; but at last being deserted by his troops, and finding it impossible to escape, he surrendered prisoner, and was kept by Seleucus in Chersonesus, where he died three years after.—*Vid. Plutarch. Vit. Demet.*

which a hundred thousand volumes were left by his successor; and where, at last, there were reckoned no less than seven hundred thousand. The Egyptians thus improved by Greece, which they had formerly delivered from barbarism, at last acquired a taste for what was really excellent, and a knowledge vastly superior to that of which they had been so proud for a number of ages. The single tower of Pharos, which was built for the safety of mariners, deserves more to be admired than those enormous useless masses the pyramids. Ptolemy resigned his crown, two years before his death, to his son Ptolemy Philadelphus, who followed the steps of his father, and greatly promoted the progress of learning and commerce; but the beginning of his reign was stained with an act of horrid injustice, by putting Demetrius Phalereus to death for having attempted to dissuade his father from relinquishing the crown.

Death of Lysimachus and Seleucus.

The tragical deaths of Lysimachus and Seleucus, complete the horrors of our story. The first, misled by his second wife Arsinoë, a cruel stepmother, put to death his son Agathocles, her brother-in-law; by which, having made himself detested by his principal officers, they forsook him, and, joining Seleucus, persuaded him to take up arms against their former master, who was soon after killed in the field. Seleucus seized his possessions, and was himself assassinated by Ceraunus, the brother of the king of Egypt; an ungrateful wretch whom he had loaded with kindnesses. Seleucus, surnamed Nicator, because of his victories, has been highly praised as an encourager of learn-

ing. He restored the library to the Athenians, of which they had been robbed by Xerxes.

Ceraunus usurps their thrones.

The treacherous Ceraunus, that he might secure to himself the throne of Lysimachus, married Arsinoë, and then murdering her children, while in her arms, confined her in Samothrace. He fell by the hands of the Gauls, who very soon overran all Greece. Antigonus Gonatas, the son of Demetrius Poliorcetes, became king of Macedonia. Almost all these revolutions were occasioned by most atrocious crimes. Though the guilty sometimes escaped punishment, yet their memories must be equally detested. Such, then, were the fruits of the conquests of Alexander the Great!

Antigonus Gonatas.

Before Christ, 278. Irruption of the Gauls.

In that feeble state to which Greece had fallen, it was naturally to be expected that it must sink under a deluge of Gauls, who suddenly came pouring in upon it with unbounded fury. That valiant, barbarous people, hurried on by a restless disposition which was natural to them, or by some unknown cause, sought, at a distance from home, to find new settlements. Brennus, one of their chiefs, more than a century before, had carried terror to the very gates of Rome. Another Brennus penetrated into Greece, and passing Thermopylæ, marched towards Delphos, with an intention to pillage the famous temple of Apollo. *It is but just*, said he, *that the gods should give a part of their riches to men, who have more need of them, and can employ them to better purpose.*

Defeat of the Gauls.

Though the Greeks had made some efforts to oppose him, they were dispersed very soon by a single misfortune; but, however, heaven seemed to fight for the preservation of the tem-

ple, and that fortunate incident saved them. A violent storm, accompanied with an earthquake, so terrified the Gauls, that being seized with a panic, they slew one another in the darkness of the night. The Greeks being assembled to protect the temple, seized the opportunity to fall upon the enemy; and having attacked them, cut them entirely in pieces. Brennus being wounded, in despair stabbed himself with his own poniard. If we may give credit to some historians, there was not a man of one hundred and sixty-five thousand escaped. The interest of the priests, and a passion for the marvellous, must have evidently changed, and greatly magnified matters; and Rollin shows more piety than judgment when he intimates, that divine vengeance might be manifested in a miraculous manner on such an occasion. Shall the true God then make use of miracles to chastise Brennus for contemning the gods of paganism?

The Gauls settled in Asia.

Another army of Gauls having crossed the Hellespont, entered into the service of Nicomedes, king of Bythinia, who, in return, gave them that country which has since been called Galatia, or Gallo-Græcia, in Asia Minor.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ACHÆAN LEAGUE. ARATUS. AGIS. CLEOMENES. THE GREEKS SUBDUED BY THE ROMANS.

The Achæan league, and the attempts of Agis and Cleomenes to restore the ancient manners of Sparta, present to our view an object highly

deserving our attention, before that time when Greece was subjected to Rome.

Achæan league.

When Achaia, following the example of the other Grecian states, shook off the yoke of royalty, her cities entered into a confederacy, which was exceedingly well calculated for their interest, as all motives of jealousy and discord were banished by a perfect equality. Their public affairs were regulated by a common Senate, in which two prætors, who were elected annually, presided, and likewise commanded their army, with the assistance of a council, consisting of ten members, without whose concurrence nothing of consequence could be attempted. Justice was the very soul of this league, which, being formed solely for the safety of the people, could not be disturbed by the attempts of ambition. Under the kings of Macedonia, who were the successors of Alexander, the Achæans, as well as the greatest part of their neighbours, lost their liberty. Every city had its particular tyrant, or a foreign garrison; and the league, which, till that time, consisted only of twelve obscure cities of Peloponnesus, was entirely broken.

Before Christ, 280. Aratus.

However, the love of liberty once more revived. Some of the cities drove out the tyrants, and renewed their former alliance. The republic resumed its original form, and very soon increased by the association of several states, who partook of the advantages of the league; when a virtuous and able chief raised them both to fame and power. Aratus, a noble spirited young man, who was animated with a truly patriotic zeal, having freed his country Sicyon, which was enslaved by the tyrant Ni-

cocles, and dreading lest it should become a prey to factions, joined it to the Achæan league. He showed himself worthy of commanding, and was elected Prætor, which was a dignity no longer divided between two. Though the election was annual, the power continued in his hands.

Though Aratus was of a lively, brave, and elevated genius, celebrated for performing bold enterprises which required rapid execution, yet he had the misfortune to be slow and timid at the head of an army, when he could deliberate coolly upon the dangers and difficulties of an undertaking. According to Polybius, qualities totally opposite were to be found united in him, being no longer the same man in different circumstances.

Before Christ, 244. Aratus delivers Corinth.

His detestation of tyranny made him undertake to free Peloponnesus, and to make the Achæan league an insurmountable barrier against all invasions. The king of Macedonia being in possession of the citadel of Corinth, which was a terror to all the states of Greece, Aratus formed a daring scheme to drive out the garrison. A person undertook to lead him, by a by-path, to the walls of the place, and if the scheme succeeded, was to have a reward of sixty talents; but it was necessary that the money should be previously deposited. Aratus had not so much; but, to make up the sum, he pledged his plate, his wife's jewels, and all his valuable effects. He purchased, says Plutarch, the greatest danger at the expense of his whole fortune, without discovering his secret to any one, or having any security but the hope of rendering an important service to his

country; a generosity surpassing all heroic actions. An infinite number of obstacles concurred to oppose him. The citadel was situated upon a steep rock which seemed inaccessible; yet Aratus made his way into the place, and drove out the garrison. The Corinthians respected him as their deliverer, and strengthened the league by joining the Achæans.

Argos does not join in the league.

He did not succeed so well in his attempts in favour of Argos. Aristippus, a cruel suspicious tyrant, always surrounded with his guards, yet always in fear, kept them in slavery. This monster let loose several assassins against Aratus; but the love of the people made them so watchful for his preservation, that his attempts were fruitless. The Prætor attacked Aristippus, but lost the first battle; and though the tyrant fell in a second engagement, Argos remained under the yoke of another. Lysiades, who governed Megalopolis, had nothing tyrannical in his disposition, but willingly resigned his power at the persuasion of Aratus, and advised his people to join the league. They were protected by the king of Egypt against the Macedonians.

Sparta corrupted by avarice.

The affairs of Peloponnesus were greatly changed by a revolution which took place in Sparta. By losing their manners, that republic lost all their glory and power. Lysander, by introducing gold, had opened a way for every kind of corruption, which could not fail to prove fatal; and Epilades, one of the Ephori, completed all, by obtaining a decree entitling every one to dispose of his own property. This Epilades, while he sought to disinherit his son with whom he was dissatisfied, in fact

ruined his country. The division of lands no longer subsisting, the rich very soon got possession of the inheritance of the poor, and the wretchedness of the people daily increased. Mechanical employments having become necessary to procure a livelihood, all the ancient exercises were abandoned; and avarice effaced every principle of honour and honesty. Debts and prosecutions ruined most of the citizens. Sparta reckoned only seven hundred, of whom six hundred had no possessions in land.

Agis undertakes to restore the laws of Lycurgus.

The young king Agis, descended from the famous Agesilaus, though bred in effeminacy, conceived a design for correcting these evils. An enthusiastic love of virtue made him blind to every obstacle, and, in hopes of being able to restore the laws of Lycurgus, he began by practising them himself; but the rustic manners which subsisted in the time of the lawgiver, were better calculated for bending the minds of the people to a rigid legislation than manners, when once tainted by vicious refinements. Circumstances required a different plan of reformation; and it is probable that Lycurgus, in the present situation of things, would have failed. The youth, ardent in their pursuits, whether after good or evil, yielded to the impressions made upon them by the young king, whose heroic sentiments had gained their hearts; but those who had been debauched by long practice, shuddered at the very name of Lycurgus, as Plutarch expresses it, *like fugitive slaves about to be led back to their masters.*

They annihilated all debts.

In the mean time, Agis having gained his mother and several of the leading citizens,

proposed to renew the partition of the lands; but was opposed by his colleague Leonidas, who was induced to it by the entreaties of the women, and by his own interest. One of the Ephori accused Leonidas of having violated the laws; and as he did not dare to make his appearance, they gave his crown to his son-in-law Cleombrotus, who concurred with Agis in his plan of improvement. Every difficulty seemed to vanish, and all the poor heartily wished for the reformation to take place; but Agesilaus, one of the Ephori, a man who was deeply involved in debt, deceived both the kings, by persuading them to annul the debts before they divided the lands. All the deeds were seized, and burnt in public. Agesilaus smiling, said, *that he had never seen so fine a fire.* But when the division of the lands was proposed, he found pretences for a delay.

Agis condemned to death and executed.

During these transactions, the Achæans, who were allies of Sparta, applied for assistance against the Etolians, a fierce banditti, who threatened to lay waste the country of Peloponnesus, from which they were not far distant. Agis commanded the troops, and was admired for restoring the ancient discipline of his country; but, at his return, he found a woful change in the face of affairs. Cleombrotus being dethroned, and Leonidas restored by the power of faction, he was himself obliged to seek an asylum in the temple. Some treacherous friends getting possession of his person, dragged him to prison. Being interrogated by the Ephori, whether he did not repent of having attempted to introduce innovations in the state; he replied, that even if

he was surrounded with the apparatus of death, he would not repent of so worthy an action. On this answer, without regard to royalty, which had hitherto been always highly respected in Sparta, they sentenced that virtuous prince to be put to death. One of his executioners melting into tears, *Cease to bewail me*, said the king; *though I suffer an unjust death, I am much happier than my murderers.* His mother and grandmother having come to see him in prison, the cruel monsters made them enter, and strangled them both upon the body of Agis. Sparta, polluted with such barbarities, is a most dreadful example of revolutions in the moral world, brought about by vice and the contempt of laws.

Before Christ, 242. Cleomenes makes war against the Achæans.

Leonidas survived this catastrophe but a very short time. His son Cleomenes, whom he had compelled to marry the widow of Agis, was of a lively, bold, ambitious character, and capable of attempting the greatest enterprises. He loved his wife, and the conversation of that princess excited in him a desire of bringing about the reformation. Whether it proceeded from virtue or ambition, and his proceedings hitherto did not bespeak him a man of virtue, he zealously embraced the scheme, and made it the foundation of his politics. It was with reason that war seemed to him a necessary help for carrying his projects into execution, for as the minds of the people were not disposed to hearken to reason, it was needful to employ force. Some hostilities of the Achæans, who wanted Sparta and Arcadia to join in the league, afforded him a pretence for attacking them, and with an army of five thousand

men only, he offered them battle; but though Aratus had twenty thousand, he declined coming to an engagement. Cleomenes, exulting on this first instance of success, repeated an old expression of one of the kings of Sparta, *The Spartans do not inquire the number of the enemy, but where they are to be found.*

Violence of Cleomenes.

A victory which he gained over the Achæans having redoubled his confidence, at his return to Sparta, he recalled Archidamus, the brother of Agis, who had fled from his country upon the death of that king. According to Plutarch, Cleomenes wanted to place him upon the throne, but he was assassinated by the murderers of his brother. Polybius, who was almost a cotemporary, on the contrary, ascribes the assassination of Archidamus to Cleomenes, and relates the particular circumstances. However, it is universally agreed that this king employed the same means to get rid of the whole body of the Ephori; a very extraordinary method of restoring the laws of Lycurgus! The Ephori made an abominable use of power, by keeping their princes in dread of them; but ought not a violent deed of despotism, which was employed to abolish them, make the people tremble? After this massacre, fourscore citizens were banished, which made it an easy matter to secure the remaining suffrages.

Division of the lands.

Cleomenes was the first who gave up his property to the public, and his friends followed his example. The lands were then divided as they had been formerly; the exercises and eating in common were also restored. He took his brother Euclidas for his colleague, which

was a political stroke to render himself master of the state, as the two kings, till that time, had always been chosen from the two branches of the Heraclidæ. It does not appear that Cleomenes followed the example of Lycurgus, in banishing gold and silver out of the state. If the restoration of the ancient manners was the only purpose he had in view, he certainly ought to have extirpated that seed of corruption. I own that the example of the prince might inspire the people with a love of frugality, simplicity of manners, and patience; but is it not at the same time to be dreaded, that the whole might be defeated by a contrary example, unless it were rendered impossible by the total proscription of riches?

Cleomenes wishes to govern the Achæans.

The king of Sparta had it principally in view to resume that superiority which the republic had possessed for several ages, and therefore required of the Achæans that he might be appointed to command; but Aratus did not approve of having him for a master, and with great reason, because it was more than probable that he would play the tyrant. However, as the Prætor found that he could not resist the Spartan power, he had recourse to the king of Macedonia, to whom he had hitherto shown himself the greatest enemy. By this single step, according to Plutarch, he tarnished that glory which he had acquired by thirty years' prudent conduct, as the Spartan yoke should have been thought more tolerable for the Greeks than the Macedonians. Yet this same writer allows that Aratus yielded to the temper of the times, *which commands those who seem to command.* In fact, such was their hat-

red against the Spartans, that the league was ready to be dissolved, if any other measures had been taken. Polybius is of the same opinion, and his testimony is not to be doubted. At the time that Antigonus Doson was called into Peloponnesus, Cleomenes had seized Corinth. The citadel was therefore given in pledge to Antigonus; and a more valuable security could not have been offered.

Before Christ, 223. Cleomenes defeated at Selasia.

However formidable was this new enemy, Cleomenes seized Megalopolis almost before his face, and insulted him at the walls of Argos; but being obliged to defend Lacedemonia, and falling short both of money and provisions, he was resolved to venture upon a decisive action. The famous battle of Selasia, where he was defeated by Antigonus, destroyed all his hopes and projects. Philopæmen of Megalopolis, at that time a very young man, contributed very much to the success of the day, by attacking a body of Spartans, contrary to the opinion of his superior officers, and even against the orders of the king. Antigonus pretended to find fault with the commanding officer, and he laid the blame upon Philopæmen. *That young man*, said the king, *has behaved like a great general, by seizing the proper moment, while you have acted like a young man.* To seize an opportunity of gaining an advantage of the enemy, is to obey the general, provided success justifies what may at first sight seem to be a breach of orders.

Cleomenes retires to Egypt.

Cleomenes returned to Sparta after his defeat, and advised the citizens to receive Antigonus, whom, in fact, they could not resist; but being unwilling himself to submit to the

dictates of the conqueror, he embarked for Egypt, where he hoped for protection from Ptolemy Evergetes. One of his friends advised him to put an end to his disgrace by a voluntary death; to whom he answered, that it was cowardly to die from a dread of false shame, or the desire of false honour; that death should be an action, and not the consequence of past actions; that he thought it was his duty to preserve his life for the good of his country; and that it would be an easy matter to die when all hope was over. Evergetes, greatly affected with such noble sentiments, would have assisted him, if he had not been prevented by death.

He invites the Egyptians to rebel. His death.

Under Ptolemy Philopater his successor, Cleomenes, mistrusted by a voluptuous court, very soon saw himself without farther resource, and even a prisoner at large. He therefore, with thirteen faithful friends who still adhered to him, entered into a resolution to conclude all by a desperate attempt. Having escaped from his guards, he ran into the streets of Alexandria, inviting the Egyptians to rebel; but no creature attempting to stir, the Spartans killed one another, that they might escape punishment. The body of Cleomenes was affixed to a cross, and his mother and children were massacred. Livy calls him the first tyrant of Sparta; and perhaps he deserves that appellation, rather than that of reformer.

Sparta sinks into oblivion.

After the battle of Selasia, Sparta fell into the hands of Antigonus, who behaved to its inhabitants in a manner which procured him more honour than he had gained by his victory; for he left them at liberty to govern by their own

laws, without having used against them a single act of severity. The Ephori were restored The changes which were made by Cleomenes could not continue, as the manners of the people remained still corrupted. That republic, which had formerly been a barrier for the security of the liberties of Greece, from this time forward had its particular tyrant, and was no longer heard of in the history of celebrated nations. The race of the Heraclidæ became extinct at the death of Agesipolis, the successor of Cleomenes.

Before Christ, 215. Philip poisons Aratus.

The Achæan league, on the contrary, was preserved by the prudent management of Aratus, who enjoyed the entire confidence of Antigonus, and likewise that of his successor Philip, the ally of Hannibal, in the beginning of his reign; but Philip being soon corrupted by the flatterers that were round him, the honest sincerity of Aratus could no longer be endured; and therefore he caused him to be poisoned. *This is the friendship of kings*, said Aratus, when he began to feel the effect of the poison.

Philopœmen supports the league.

The Achæans took up arms against Philip, and Philopœmen added new lustre to the republic, which continued to preserve a love for liberty, even after Rome began to bear rule in the country, as we shall see when we come to that part of our history. The taking of Corinth by Mummius foretold the total wreck of that liberty which had produced so many models of heroism; and Greece soon after became a Roman province, known by the name of Achaia. From this period, all the different historians include the history of Greece in that of Rome.

'Crushed under the weight of its domestic discords and the Roman power,' says the Abbé Mably, 'Greece still preserved a very honourable superiority over her conquerors. Her knowledge, a taste for learning, philosophy, and the arts, revenged her, if we may use the expression, for her overthrow, and, in her turn, subjected the pride of the Romans. The conquerors became the disciples of the conquered, and learnt a language which Homer, Pindar, Thucydides, Xenophon, Demosthenes, Plato, and Euripides, had embellished with all the graces of their elevated genius. Orators who had already captivated the citizens of Rome, went among the Greeks to acquire that delicate elegance of taste, perhaps the most excellent of all talents, the secret of that art which gives new powers to genius; in one word, they went to learn that enchanting gift of eloquence which can display every thing to advantage. In their schools of philosophy, the most distinguished Romans shook off their prejudices, learnt to respect the Greeks, and, in their return to their own country, brought with them esteem and gratitude. From these motives, Rome made her yoke less burdensome, and, dreading to abuse the rights of conquest, distinguished Greece from all the other conquered provinces, by particular marks of favour. What an honour to letters, to be able to save that country where they had been cherished, from evils which lawgivers, magistrates, and the greatest military geniuses could not protect her! Here the Greeks were avenged for the contempt shown them by ignorance; and they are certain of being respected wherever such

Greece reduced by the Romans, retains the empire of learning.

estimators of merit are to be found as were the Romans.' *

These judicious reflections lead us to inquire into the arts, learning, philosophy, and sciences of the Greeks. As we have not time to examine such important matters to the *foundation*, let us endeavour to investigate their first principles, so as to form a just idea of them. We shall find them infinitely more useful than all the recitals of wars, battles, intrigues, and petty changes which may be extracted from the immensity of human affairs, to form large libraries, in which little or nothing instructive is to be found, or than all those catalogues of names and dates which have been heaped up for an oppressive burden to the memory, without conveying the least information upon subjects of the greatest importance to mankind. To know only words is to know nothing; to become acquainted with unimportant facts, is little better than nothing; but to acquire a knowledge of what is interesting to society, is the proper study of a gentleman.

* Observ. sur les Grecs.

REFLECTIONS ON THE ARTS, THE LITERATURE, AND THE SCIENCE OF THE GREEKS.

THE ARTS OF GREECE.

CHAPTER I.

AGRICULTURE. COMMERCE. NAVIGATION.

As the Greeks increased in knowledge, they quickly became sensible of the importance of agriculture, to which they had shown great dislike, before they became thoroughly acquainted with the benefits of society. It is agriculture which peoples and supports kingdoms, and procures for them their most solid riches. It is upon agriculture that the happiness of nations, situated in a fertile soil, depends. Plenty of natural productions procures other wealth, or prevents the people from being sensible of the want of it. Without the fruits of the earth, all other riches are but an useless burden; and we sometimes see the fable of Midas, by woful experience, realized. It was for that reason the sages of antiquity, particularly Xenophon, applied to the study of this subject, with which they ought to have been still better acquainted; their lessons being limited to the common practice of their

Advantage of agriculture.

own times. To be convinced of the resources which are to be found in a well cultivated country, it is not necessary to rely on the evidence of Pliny, when he says that a single grain of corn frequently yielded a hundred ears in Egypt and Bœotia. The highest produce which even Sicily afforded, according to Cicero, was but ten for one.

Price of provisions.

The soil of Attica being proper only for raising olives, which were carefully cultivated by the Athenians, they had recourse to their colonies to supply that defect. Byzantium, according to Demosthenes, supplied them annually with four hundred thousand medimni of corn. The medimnus, which was reckoned about six measures of twenty pounds each, was sold for only five drachmæ; from whence it is evident that specie was scarce, and that living was very cheap. An ox was sold in the time of Solon for five drachmæ, and a hog in the time of Socrates for three; so very moderate was the price of the necessaries of life.

Commerce of the Athenians.

However, from the time of the expedition of Xerxes into Peloponnesus, the Athenians devoted their attention to commerce. Navigation had opened different channels, but still it was very limited. Xenophon, in his *Treatise upon the Public Revenue*, advises the Athenians to spare no pains in making commerce flourish; to favour all who were concerned in it, whether natives or foreigners; even to advance money upon proper security, and to provide them with the necessary shipping. He supposes, what should be looked upon as a maxim in government, that the riches of individuals make the wealth of the state. Above all things, he re-

commends the working of the mines in the country; because materials which are found at home, and the industry which is necessary to make them fit for use, are the most valuable grounds of commerce.

I do not mention Corinth, nor the trading colonies, such as Syracuse; we know, in general, that they were opulent and corrupted. The Moderns have greatly improved the theory of commerce. It is not to be doubted, that when it is regulated by sound principles, it must furnish very considerable resources to a state; but how was it possible that people could fancy riches to be the foundation of the happiness of kingdoms? or that they could neglect morals, education and laws, leave the citizens to sink into a fatal degeneracy, and confine their whole political views within the narrow circle of the finances? History furnishes us with a thousand examples of nations being corrupted by riches, who never were so near destruction as when they seemed to have the wealth of the whole world at their disposal.

Commerce of Alexandria.

Alexandria became so flourishing by commerce under the Ptolemies, as to make Tyre and Carthage to be forgotten. A canal of communication between Coptus and the Red Sea, which was dug by Ptolemy Philadelphus, with inns for the convenience of merchants all along the banks, attracted the whole commerce of the southern parts of Asia. Egypt, cured of its ancient superstition, grew as fond of the sea as it had detested it formerly. The navy of Ptolemy Philadelphus is said to have consisted of a hundred and twenty ships of an uncommon size, and four thousand other vessels.

while one, by his competitor Alcamenes, seemed excellent. *Place them at the proper distance*, said Phidias; and the experiment showed the advantage he derived from a knowledge of perspective. His statue of Minerva, which was made of gold and ivory, twenty-six cubits high, having exposed him to be insulted and abused by his ungrateful countrymen, he revenged himself, by making one of Jupiter Olympius at Elis, the idea of which he took from the Iliad of Homer.

Other celebrated sculptors.

Myron of Athens; Polyctetes and Lysippus of Sicyonia; Praxiteles, and Scopas of Paros, were likewise celebrated sculptors. Lysippus was believed to have executed more than six hundred statues: he was the only person whom Alexander would allow to make a statue of him, as Apelles was his only painter. The two statues of Venus by Praxiteles were much admired. Having given the people of Cos their choice of them at the same price, they preferred the least handsome, because it was clothed, and the other naked; an example of modesty which would have been praised even in the Spartans. Our most eminent modern artists copy nature after the antique statues, many of them having escaped the ravages of time. Nothing can do more honour to the taste of the Ancients.

Painting in Greece.

The wonders, which Pliny and several other writers tell us, of the state of painting in Greece, cannot be proved, and seem the more incredible, as, even by the confession of Pliny, the Greeks used only four colours, black, white, red, and yellow. It is true, that they were acquainted with that imperceptible diminution of

the lights, that clear-obscure between light and shade, which makes the figures seem to swell on the canvas, and displays the most distant parts of the piece; but there is great room to doubt of their producing the same effects, which are admired so much at present. Painted fruits pecked at by birds, and painted horses which made horses neigh, have a great deal of the marvellous, with which Pliny has overcharged his writings. What would he have said, if he had seen the pictures painted by Raphael and Rubens?

Different kinds of painting.

The caustic painting consisted in applying wax of different colours, upon wood or ivory by the help of fire; an art of which the Count de Caylus has recovered the secret. The Ancients knew nothing of painting in oil. Pliny says, that they did not paint upon cloth before the time of Nero, and assures us, that the great masters rarely painted in fresco. We have many pieces of ancient mosaic still preserved, which cannot be admired as painting.

Celebrated painters.

Among the many celebrated painters, it is sufficient to mention the name of Polygnotus, who received the thanks of the council of the Amphyctions in a public decree, which entitled him to have his expenses defrayed wherever he travelled, for having painted *gratis* the story of the Trojan war, in one of the porticos of Athens; Apollodorus, who invented the enchanting art of painting in clear-obscure; before which, according to Pliny, there was not a picture which was thought worthy of attention. Zeuxis, who having become wealthy, made presents of his works, *Because*, as he haughtily said, *they were invaluable;* Parrhasius, whom

Zeuxis, it is said, allowed to be his superior, after having been deceived by a curtain which he had painted; Pamphilus, who was the first that added a knowledge of the sciences to the art of painting, and required a talent yearly from his pupils; Timanthes, who became famous from his celebrated picture of Iphigenia, in which he drew a veil over the figure of Agamemnon, whose grief was too great for expression; Apelles, the scholar of Pamphilus and painter of Alexander, who exposed his works to public view, that he might profit by the remarks of passengers; and Protogenes, the rival of Apelles, who praised him highly, but with this addition, *that he did not know how to lay down his pencil;* that is to say, he offended by being too minute and correct.

The rewards of artists.

The honours and rewards which were lavished upon artists, were undoubtedly the best instruments for inciting them to improve their genius, and Athens can only be reproached with having carried them to excess. The more they were sensible of the value of the fine arts, the more ought they to have felt that superiority which accompanies a life of virtue; the performing of noble actions, and every kind of solid merit, which, instead of serving only to amuse the people, should help to improve their understandings, and secure their happiness. But when these agreeable accomplishments are preferred to all others; when they swallow up the rewards due to essential services; when they exhaust the wealth which is wanted for the support of the nation; when there is such a value set upon them as to make every thing else to be looked upon with disdain; then mo-

rals, principles, laws, and government, are threatened with a total overthrow.

This the Athenians sadly experienced. At the time when they were only engaged in admiring statues, pictures, and public shows, Phryne the courtesan, mistress of Praxitiles, and of many others, had the effrontery to undertake to rebuild the city of Thebes, upon condition that she might affix the following inscription, *Thebes was destroyed by Alexander, and rebuilt by Phryne.* Zeuxis, dressed in purple and gold, made a pompous display of his pride at the Olympic games. Parrhasius insolently presented himself to public view with a crown of gold upon his head, about the time that Socrates and Phocion drank the hemlock.

The importance attached to music.

One thing very remarkable in the manners of ancient Greece, is the importance which was attached to music. It was in some degree interwoven in the constitution, and even had an influence upon the laws. The austere Spartans were so attentive to music, and considered it as an object of so great importance, that every innovation was strictly forbidden. Plato defends the necessity of this law, for which I can assign no motive, but the acute sensibility of the Greeks, and the strong impression which was made upon them by harmony.

Its real use.

They had experienced the advantages of harmony, in civilizing the people, and softening their savage manners, rousing their courage in battle, inspiring the love of virtue, and animating them to the performance of noble actions, by celebrating the praises of great men; for music and poetry, going hand in hand, conduce to that purpose. In one word,

music became an essential part in the education of youth. That grave and judicious author Polybius takes notice, that it was so necessary to the Arcadians in particular, that, by the neglect of it, one of their cities Cynætha became noted for its ferocity and barbarity, of which, till the time of that omission, there had been but few examples. Plutarch, after the most famous philosophers, represents music as an excellent means of soothing the passions, and regulating the heart and temper; but he speaks of a manly, simple, and majestic music, which had none of that effeminate licentiousness with which Plato and Aristotle reproach the theatres in their days. The principles should be suited to poetry and dancing, both the one and the other being comprehended in the general idea of music. The Romans left an art to their slaves which the Greeks held in such estimation.

Ancient music.

At first the lyre had only three strings. In the reign of Philip, Timotheus increased them to eleven, to which others were afterwards added. It is a doubt among the learned, whether the ancients were acquainted with *counterpoint*, or with pieces of music in different parts performed together. Their music was divided into eighteen tones, which they distinguished by so many particular characters. The gamut, which was invented by Guido d'Arezzo in the eleventh century, has greatly facilitated the art; and in this, as well as many other things, the Moderns seem greatly to excel the Ancients. The work of M. Burette, in the Memoirs of the Academy of Belles Lettres, vol. V., may be consulted for information on this subject.

THE ART OF WAR.

Art of war.

THE improvement of the fine arts did not retard the progress of that of war. The many victories gained by the Greeks must be ascribed to the discipline of the troops and the abilities of their generals. I shall examine some particulars relating to their forces, for it is of consequence to have an idea of the springs which produced such important events, and decided the fate of kingdoms.

Citizens born to defend their country necessarily form her armies. A republican spirit, a love of glory and liberty, naturally produce heroes. A Spartan served in the field from the age of thirty to sixty, while the youth and aged guarded the city, where they lived harder than their fellow-citizens who were with the army. War alone served a little to soften the austerity of that people, who had it in view in all their institutions; and Lycurgus found the secret of making it a pleasure to them. As to the Athenians, they entered into the service of the republic, by taking a solemn oath at the age of eighteen, and carried arms till they were sixty. Men who fight for their wives, children, and property, and, what is still more, for their liberty, ought to be superior to the generality of military men; but what is it that a sense of honour and a well disciplined army cannot effect among the Moderns?

Pay of the troops.

When the wars continued long, and were carried on at a distance, it became necessary to provide for the subsistence of the troops. Pe-

ricles fixed the pay of the army; the foot soldier had four oboli, the horseman a drachma, the sailor three oboli.* The Spartans were seen to serve in Asia, in the pay of the Persians.

Arms of the Greeks.

The arms of the Grecians were, a helmet, cuirass, buckler, sword, lance, javelin, bow and arrows, which were all improved by time and experience. Iphicrates, an Athenian, reduced the size and weight of the buckler, and lengthened the swords and lances; he had cuirasses made of flax, steeped in vinegar mixed with salt, which it was said were better than those made of iron; but this is not easily to be conceived. He constantly exercised his troops to military evolutions, and that important part of their duty was much improved.

Cavalry and infantry.

The greatest strength of the Grecian armies consisted in infantry. They had given up their chariots which were formerly so common, yet so useless, or rather dangerous. Their cavalry, which, for want of horses, were but few in number, fought in good order. They knew nothing of either saddles, stirrups, or boots, and they could do without them. What is told of the Numidians is astonishing; for it is said they could manage their horses perfectly, without either bit or bridle. So much is it in the power of habit and industry to supply the want of those helps, which we think absolutely necessary.

Art of sieges.

During the war which Sparta carried on against the Messenians, the city of Ithome, from

* Fivepence one-sixth. Sevenpence three farthings. Threepence seven-eighths.

its being situated upon a mountain, held out a siege of nineteen years. The art of war was at that time in its infancy. In proportion as the Greeks became more enlightened, and the people reflected upon their interest, they made rapid progress in acquiring knowledge of that subject; the choosing proper situations for encamping, excellent dispositions for action, skilful manœuvres, the secrets of the attack and defence of places, were no longer unknown. They made use of all sorts of warlike machines; catapultæ, balistæ, moving towers, tortoises, battering rams, of which it is easy to find descriptions. We need only read the history of the sieges of Tyre and Syracuse to make us conceive the resources which the ancients derived from genius and courage.

Means of exciting courage.

It is needless to repeat, that the maintenance of discipline, rewards and punishments, the love of glory, and the dread of shame, were the principal causes which gave the Greeks a superiority over their enemies. They spared no pains to render their people invincible. Though the Spartans were accustomed to despise death from their infancy, yet they wore red clothes when they went to war, to prevent the blood from being seen to flow from their wounds. Nature should be assisted in every thing. Sometimes things which are apparently of but little consequence produce great effects. What is it that hope and fear, the two great movers of the human heart, cannot effect when guided by prudence?

THE LITERATURE OF GREECE.

CHAPTER II.

POETRY.

A DELICATE taste, a lively imagination, a fertility of genius, a rich harmonious language, eminent abilities excited by the most ardent emulation, all together contributed to make the Greeks, in point of learning, the masters and models of the whole world. Their incomparable language, universally flexible, and *fit* to embellish every subject, had, under the pen of Homer, united grace, strength, and majesty, and was worthy either to celebrate the praises of Jupiter or of Venus; which, *if I am not* mistaken, evidently proves that there were good writers before the time of Homer; for languages are formed but very slowly, and can be improved only by the labours of the learned.

Origin and objects of poetry.

Poetry has almost always been prior to every other kind of learning, which is undoubtedly owing to its being the produce of sentiment and fancy, two faculties of the mind always employed before reason. Sensible minds are led, by a kind of instinct, to sing their pleasures, their happiness, the gods whom they adore, the heroes they admire, and the events they wish to have engraven upon their me-

mories. Accordingly, poetry has been cultivated in all savage nations. The warmth of the passions has been of great use in promoting this delightful art, but the cause of humanity has often given a subject for the song of the poet. The intention of the Iliad of Homer was to stifle that discord which prevailed in the minds of the Greeks, and, by exhibiting a view of the noble deeds of their ancestors, to inspire them with a passion for performing heroic actions. If the milder virtues had been known at that time, it is probable they had likewise been celebrated by Homer.

Tragedy.

The drama, which was invented in the time of Solon, had its source from the poems of Homer. Actions which gave pleasure to the reader, received additional charms by being introduced upon the stage, and were accompanied with eminent advantages. Æschylus, who was the real father of tragedy, for the farces of Thespis do not deserve that name, employed terror and pity to affect the human heart. He lived at the time of the invasion by Xerxes, and his pieces were filled with expressions of hatred against tyranny. Sophocles made his appearance before the death of Æschylus, and not only disputed with him, but carried from him the prize of merit, by rendering tragedy more interesting, by the regularity of his plots, and the elevation of his style. Euripides, who was his rival, introduced that philosophy which brings morals into action, and inspires the mind with a love of virtue.

Its use.

We can scarcely believe, that the principal view of these poets was to correct the passions,

by affecting the heart with pathetic subjects; but it is certain, that while they sought the approbation of the spectators, they conveyed most admirable instructions to the audience, without making use of expressions which could corrupt the hearts, or injure the morals of the people. How greatly useful would theatrical representations prove, if such alluring pleasures were only employed as a vehicle for conveying noble and virtuous sentiments!

Comedy. Comedy in particular may be made one of the best schools for society, by exposing vice to ridicule. It is inconceivable how the Athenians could bestow such applause, as they did, upon the indecent buffooneries of Aristophanes, after having acquired a relish for the moral lessons of their tragic poets. They almost imputed to Euripides as a crime, the having put the following expression into the mouth of Hippolytus: *My tongue has pronounced the oath, but my heart does not approve;* though the oath to which he alludes seems to be opposite to his duty. Yet, at the same time, they permitted the characters of their gods, as well as the government, their magistrates and Socrates, to be ridiculed upon the stage, in pieces which were equally an insult to religion and common decency. The old comedy was of most unbridled licentiousness, sacrificing every thing to satire; and what we have still remaining of Aristophanes is, in that respect, a disgrace to Athens. *Middle* comedy, which sprung up in the time of the Thirty Tyrants, only disguised the names, and insulted the persons, which rather whetted than extinguished the malignity of the people. But at

last Alexander checked this insolent licentiousness. The *new* comedy described the manners, without offending particular persons, by presenting a mirror, as Boileau expresses it, in which every one might see a picture of himself, laugh at his own irregularities, and, in an agreeable manner, learn to correct his errors. We cannot too much regret the loss of the works of Menander, who shone eminently in this boundless field, since we know that the taste of Terence was formed from his writings.

We must be as zealous idolizers of antiquity as Madam Dacier, not to allow that the Moderns are greatly superior to the Greeks in the dramatic art. While we acknowledge them to have been our masters, let us not hoodwink our reason so far as to offer incense to their faults, at the expense of the justice we owe to their rivals. The amazing number of dramatic productions of the Ancients, serves only to prove that they were not very delicate, either in the conduct or composition of their pieces. It is said that Sophocles wrote about a hundred and thirty.

The violent rage which the Athenians had for public spectacles; the rewards which they adjudged to their poets; the honour of being declared in public to be superior to their rivals; contributed to accelerate the progress of that engaging art. It requires ages before good taste can be brought to take place of the clownish farces of our progenitors. Athens very soon had her Sophocles and her Euripides; and, in some degree, the care of the theatre, among that frivolous people, was made a business of the state. We might approve of this, if their

sole object had been to improve their manners but Aristophanes, and others of his stamp, were authorized to poison the minds of the people! What idea can we form of that state where buffoons have a privilege to insult virtue, and a power to make the people rise up in rebellion against her?

Other kinds of poetry.

All the other kinds of poetry, the lyric, elegiac, epigrammatic, and pastoral, have likewise come to us from the Greeks, and have all been improved by the Romans. That genius should profit by the models of antiquity, by attending to their imperfections, and imitating their beauties with better taste, is nothing surprising.

HISTORY.

History among the Greeks.

THE knowledge of history is one of the greatest advantages we have derived from our acquaintance with the Greeks. Confused heaps of facts collected without method; *traditions*, frequently ridiculous, handed down without knowing through what channel they passed, served instead of annals to the different nations of antiquity, which could only keep the people longer in a state of barbarous ignorance, till the art of writing became universal, and some learned, diligent authors, collected, examined, and arranged historical materials, to form an interesting collection of instruction. Though some fables must have crept into works of this kind, when the writers are obliged to include the history of ancient times, of which no monuments remain, yet there are precious truths

still to be found; and, what is perhaps not less valuable, we learn, even from these fables, to suspend our judgment, and to raise doubts which are necessary to make us inquire where the truth lies. The errors of the ancients, after having for a long time misled credulous dispositions, at last produced rules of criticism by which we ought to guard against mistakes.

Herodotus of Halicarnassus, a city of Caria, is looked upon as the father of history; he was born a few years before the expedition of Xerxes into Greece. His history begins with the reign of Cyrus, and ends with the sea-engagement at Mycale. His digressions, which relate to the Egyptians and other people, are in a great measure, fabulous, because he trusted to the traditions of the priests; and it must be owned, that he is not always to be depended on in his relation of circumstances which happened in his own time; he was too fond of the marvellous to be able to distinguish the truth. We find him uttering a number of splendid falsities, with an air of candour which has brought the scandalous reproach of falsehood upon Greece, *Græcia mendax*. If he does not always prove their truth, he seems to believe them himself; yet, when compared with our ancient writers of chronicles, not only for the method, but for the matter, he deserves the highest encomiums. * Herodotus.

It was the desire of that historian to please the Greeks by flattering their credulous vani-

* See page 193.

ty. Reading his history at the Olympic games, and afterwards at one of the most splendid festivals of Athens, procured him universal applause. Thucydides, who was then young, happened to be present, and, being transported with a degree of enthusiasm, melted into tears, as if it had been a theatrical representation; which proof of genius and sensibility being observed by the author, he advised the father of the young man to cultivate such promising parts with all possible attention. A single example is often sufficient, at an early period of life, to rouse a superior genius, and to direct its future course.

Thucydides. From that time Thucydides dedicated his attention to study, and, while he served in the Peloponnesian war, his mind was constantly taken up with the thoughts of writing its history. He examined every thing; he collected materials, and made accurate notices, of every transaction. A twenty years banishment afforded him sufficient leisure to execute his purpose; and at his return to his native country, upon the expulsion of the thirty tyrants, he put the last hand to that excellent work, which comprehends the history of the twenty-one first years of the war. The gravity of his style, and the soundness of his judgment, evidently show that he was more solicitous to instruct than to please his readers.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who has been praised as a good historian and excellent critic, in drawing a parallel between Herodotus and Thycydides, gives the preference to the first, for reasons which I cannot think worthy of either a critic or historian. He blames

Thucydides for the choice of his subject, and the melancholy spectacles which he presents to the view of the reader, for the want of episodes and digressions, and for the severity of his censures; but he ought rather to have found fault with both Herodotus and Thucydides for having introduced so many orations into their histories, from a desire to embellish them, though the strict truth should thereby be sacrificed.

Xenophon. Xenophon and Ctesias, of whom we have already made particular mention, though younger, were cotemporaries of Thucydides. Beside the Cyropædia, and the expedition of the Ten Thousand, Xenophon continued the Grecian history from the time that Alcibiades returned to Athens. He appears often too credulous for a philosopher and the disciple of Socrates, but he had an infinite respect for religion.

Polybius. Polybius of Megalopolis, the pupil of Philopæmen, and friend of the great Scipio, deserves to be preferred to all the Greek, and most of the Latin historians. Of his *Universal History*, which contained the whole transactions that happened from the beginning of the second Punic war till the reduction of Macedonia, there are only his first five books, with some fragments, remaining. Dionysius of Halicarnassus says, that the reading of Polybius is intolerable, because he does not know how to arrange his words. This critic was fond of fine phrases, and certainly preferred words to things; but Brutus studied Polybius on the eve of the battle of Pharsalia.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus. The Roman antiquities, which were written by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in the time of

Augustus, is a work which has been highly praised, and contains much interesting matter upon the manners and customs of ancient Rome; but the critic discovers all the prejudices of a superstitious Greek, anxious to give a Grecian origin to every thing valuable. His eleven first books which time has spared, come no lower than the three hundred and twelfth year of Rome; the other nine are entirely lost.

Diodorus Siculus.

Diodorus Siculus, who copied Ctesias, and has not been much credited, as we formerly observed, lived in the time of Cæsar and Augustus. His *Historical Library*, of which there remains only fifteen books, goes as far back as the fabulous ages, even to the origin of the world, and comes down as low as the invasion of the Gauls. This author, who travelled for instruction, too much resembles those travellers who are totally ignorant of philosophy, and whose lies or credulity have filled their histories with doubts and perplexity.

Plutarch.

There is not a Greek historian whose history can be read with more advantage than Plutarch, the cotemporary of Nero, because he brings his readers acquainted with men, but more particularly with celebrated characters; and because his writings are animated with sound morality. He is sometimes mistaken, but he never fails to engage and instruct.

ELOQUENCE.

Eloquence at Athens.

BEFORE the time of Pericles, Athens had her declaimers, for the oratorical pulpit was become an open theatre for the pursuits of zeal

and ambition; nevertheless, the origin of true eloquence, which to the art of convincing by reason, unites the talent of persuading by sentiment, was ascribed to Pericles. Eloquence could not fail to flourish in a city where fame and fortune were sure to follow popular applause; where it acquired a power in all deliberations, even those of the republic, and where the most eloquent man became likewise the most powerful.

Demosthenes.

Let us not, then, be surprised, that Demosthenes, actuated by these motives, made such extraordinary efforts to excel in this pursuit. The weakness of his voice, and a defect in his pronunciation, occasioned his being hissed upon his first attempt to speak in public. A comedian to whom, in despair, he lamented his misfortune, comforted him, by saying, that he could find an easy remedy. He made him rehearse some verses, which he himself afterwards repeated, with such energy and grace, that Demosthenes found they had a quite different effect. This experiment convinced the young orator, that his success in a great measure depended upon action. He therefore built himself a vault, where he could practise without relaxation or disturbance for months together. Sometimes, that he might accustom himself to noise, he went and declaimed upon the sea-shore; at other times, on purpose to loosen his tongue, he spoke with small stones in his mouth, while walking or climbing. What is it that the love of labour, joined to ambition, is not able to accomplish? Demosthenes got the better of nature, and, by his eloquence, ruled as he pleased. Æschines shrunk in his presence. Neither Demades nor

Phocion could oppose him: the thunder of his eloquence carried all before him, and was more dreaded by Philip than the fleets and armies of Athens.

Isocrates. The corruption of oratory has been ascribed to Demetrius Phalereus, who preferred a florid style to the powerful warmth of his predecessors; but I am more inclined to think that the famous Isocrates should be looked upon as the model of that bad taste. Cicero somewhere calls him a great orator; but, in another place, says, that his kind of eloquence was better calculated for ornament than action; it was therefore banished from the bar, and confined to the schools.* Isocrates was only remarkable for a cold inanimate elegance; he never moves the reader he harangues. As he was deficient in action, his application was dedicated to composition and the teaching of rhetoric, by which he gained a considerable fortune. It is said that Demosthenes learnt of another person, because he could not afford to pay the fees which were demanded by Isocrates.

The sophists. When oratory was in esteem, there were masters who stepped forth to teach the art, and, in general, the sophists set themselves up as rhetoricians: their example and precepts could not fail to prove contagious. Instead of following the principles of truth and nature, they taught their pupils to alter the appearance of every thing; to change little into great; to give the colour of truth to falsehood; to take either side of a question indifferently, and to dazzle by delusions which could make no lasting impres-

* Orat. 41.

sion. A philosopher such as Aristotle, or an orator like Cicero, was wanting, to establish sound oratory. Even at this day there is nothing but the study of excellent models, frequent practice, and, above all, genius and abilities, which can make true orators. Eloquence should be studied in the Philippics, and such other masterpieces. The taste may be guided by good rules, but good models give a form and a soul.

THE SCIENCE OF THE GREEKS.

CHAPTER III.

PHILOSOPHY.

How men's minds acquire a turn for the sciences.

When the minds of men are set in motion, and they are led by curiosity, emulation, or any other motive, to dedicate their attention to study, it is impossible that all can pursue the same tract; so that if the *belles-lettres* have an invincible attraction for some, there are others no less delighted with the sciences. A passion for acquiring knowledge, and a love of searching after truth, show themselves even in the train of the Muses. When the pleasures derived from reason begin to be relished, those of the imagination lose their influence upon those se-

rious active minds who prefer the solid to the agreeable, or rather who find what is agreeable in the discovery of truth. Man, society, and nature, present to them an immense field for reflection and inquiry: they embrace philosophy, because there alone can they find the gratification of their desires.

Pursuits of the first philosophers.

The first philosophers were sages who chiefly dedicated their attention to the study and practice of morality. What could best secure the happiness of individuals or of the state, was the subject of their meditations; their deepest contemplations related to that object; they were unacquainted with vain subtilties and contentions about words, or with a passion for supporting different systems and sects, which produced such numberless errors and extravagancies, when sense was forsaken for intellectual causes, and the love of truth was sacrificed to opinion. They afterwards lost themselves in different hypotheses on the origin of the world, the first cause, the supreme good, &c. &c. Wisdom evaporated in idle reveries and endless sophistry. What was said to Thales of Miletus, by a good woman, who saw him fall while contemplating the stars, may be applied to most of the ancient philosophers. *How should you know the heavens*, said she, *when you do not see what is at your feet?*

The Ionic and Italian sects.

The Grecian philosophy was divided into two branches, the Ionic and Italian sects; both of which were subdivided into several others. Thales, the cotemporary of Solon, was at the head of the first, and Pythagoras the chief of the second. I shall only speak as an historian, and mention the most celebrated philosophers,

but in a few words, confining myself to what is most interesting.

Pythagoras deserves to be ranked first, because he laboured effectually in the cause of morals. It was not in the time of Numa, as numbers have supposed, but in that of Tarquin the Proud, about five hundred and forty years before the Christian era, that that great man did so much honour to Greece, and so much good to Italy. He was believed to be a native of Samos, and having heard the reasonings of a philosopher upon the immortality of the soul, immediately devoted himself, in a kind of enthusiasm, to the study of philosophy. He travelled into Egypt, Phœnicia, Chaldea, and probably as far as the Indies, in quest of knowledge. Though a geometrician and astronomer, he looked upon virtue as the first of the sciences, and was persuaded that he was born to make proselytes. After having taught some time in Greece, he went into that part of Italy which is called *Magna Græcia*, because of the colonies by which it was peopled. Crotona, Metapontum, and Tarentum, were the places in which he chiefly resided. Here he did not shut himself up in the shade of his closet, but openly harangued in the cause of virtue to reform the manners of the people. Crotona, a place noted for debauchery, very soon changed its appearance. A reformation took place; the women stript themselves of their ornaments, and the marriage vow became inviolably sacred. Several other towns of Italy likewise followed the instructions of the philosopher, and were governed by his counsels. One of his maxims was, that there were but five things which

Pythagoras.

ought to be combated; the diseases of the body, the ignorance of the mind, the passions of the heart, sedition in cities, and discord in private families.

His method of forming his disciples.

He lived in the same society with his disciples, and made them submit to a kind of noviciate, for at least two years, and some for *five*, during which time they were to learn in silence, without being entitled to inquire the reason of his doctrines, because he did not imagine they were capable of reasoning until they had imbibed good principles. He taught them to reason, by making them acquainted with geometry, without which they could not discover a quack or impostor. Whatever he said was received as an oracle. *The master said so*, was sufficient to stop the mouths of his scholars. Did he then order a blind submission, or did he dispel their doubts by persuasion? The true philosopher can never think of tyrannizing over the human mind, and it is not probable that a geometrician would desire to be believed upon his word.

His doctrine of the divinity.

His doctrine of the divinity was excellent. He taught the unity of God, the author of all things, an infinite almighty spirit, incapable of suffering, who is not an object of our senses, or perceivable but to the understanding. His desire was, that all our actions, and all our application, should be directed to make us resemble the Deity by the acquisition of truth, adding, that to know the truth, it is necessary to seek it with a pure heart, and keep the passions in perfect subjection. Perhaps it is without any foundation that the opinion of the Stoics has been ascribed to him; that God is the soul of

the universe, from whence human souls are derived as parts from their whole; but at least he does not seem to have taken it in the same sense with the materialists.

Metempsychosis. The metempsychosis was a fundamental part of his doctrine, in consequence of which he forbid the killing and eating of animals. The rewarding the good, and punishing the wicked, were connected with this idea, which was spread over all Asia and Egypt. It must be owned that this was an useful error for those people who had not the advantage of revelation to inform them of a future state.

His disciples were legislators. Some miracles and absurd stories have been handed down about Pythagoras, because he was looked upon as inspired. Impositions equally improbable have likewise been attributed to him; but the laws of his disciples, Zaleucus and Charondas, of which some valuable fragments have been preserved by Diodorus and Stobæus, serve as a proof of his profound wisdom amidst the ignorance of idolatry. The first of these was a lawgiver of the Sibarites, a people formerly noted for their effeminacy; the second, of the Locrians in Italy. The preamble to the laws of Zaleucus dwells upon the existence of the Deity, to whom every good which we enjoy ought to be ascribed; who disdains the sacrifices of the wicked, and who should be honoured by purity of morals and the exercise of every virtue. A body of laws erected upon such a foundation is the more to be respected, as it inspires mankind with a love of those duties which it prescribes.

Thales. Anaxagoras. Thales, the chief of the Ionic sect, said, that water was the first principle of all things, and

that God, a spiritual substance, which he believed to be the soul of matter, had formed every thing out of water. Anaxagoras, about an age after Thales, taught that the formation of the universe ought to be ascribed to an ininfinitely powerful and wise being. He believed that matter was eternal, and his successors adhered to that opinion. However, it was the greatest step that could be taken by a philosopher, to exalt his knowledge to the belief of a Supreme Being, whose wisdom had formed the world. Anaxagoras appeared impious in the eyes of the Athenians, because he said that the sun was a flaming substance; for which he would have been put to death, if Pericles had not made him fly from that superstitious city. Such are the decisions of ignorance, animated by a blind zeal, which is a disgrace to that religion it pretends to support. Upon that philosopher being asked, whether he chose to have his body, after his death, carried to Clazomene, the place of his nativity: *To what purpose?* replied he, *the road to the other world is as short from one place as another.*

Socrates. Socrates, the disciple of Anaxagoras, dedicated all his labours to serve the cause of virtue. He laughed at the vanity of the sophists; and taught his pupils to think that the proper study of man was to know himself, that he might become better. He devoted his philosophy to the good of the public, from which it never should be separated; and was made to drink the hemlock like an impious criminal, as a reward for his piety and services to his country.

Plato. Socrates committed nothing to writing; but

Plato, his disciple, composed many excellent pieces, in an eloquent style, upon the Deity, the soul, laws, and the duties of morality, though he introduced a number of extravagant ideas, from whence an infinity of chimeras were produced. He was governed by fancy; but a philosopher should hearken only to reason. He created an intellectual world, in which genii, numbers, and fantastical relations, formed a perfect chaos. Pythagoras had employed numbers, probably as signs; but Plato employed them as reasons, and nature was forgot in all his systems: it could not be found either in his physics or metaphysics, nor even in his morals, and still less in his politics, the principles of which are impracticable; nevertheless, he is often so admirable, that even his imperfections are enticing. *I should like better to be deceived with Plato*, said Cicero, *than to think right with the other philosophers.** A strange maxim, indeed, but serves to show that the greatest geniuses sometimes are dupes to prejudice.

Aristotle. Aristotle, of Stagyra in Macedonia, the most celebrated of all the disciples of Plato, was of very different sentiments, and was the founder of the sect of Peripatetics. When Alexander set out on his expedition to Asia, Aristotle went to teach at Athens, from whence he withdrew upon being accused of impiety by a priest of Ceres, though without any proof being offered, *to prevent the Athenians*, as he said, *from committing a second offence against philosophy*. His doctrine of the Deity is equivocal. Sometimes he would have it that the world is God; at other

* Tuscul. I.

times, that there is a God superior to the world. The obscurity in which almost every subject he has handled is immersed, has been greatly increased by the ignorance of modern peripatetics; but he has left some very valuable monuments of his abilities upon politics, natural history, and the *belles-lettres*, in which there is ample room to admire the extent of his knowledge, and the acuteness of his genius.

Arcesilas. Carneades.

The Academy, or school of Plato, grew very soon tired of that dogmatical philosophy, whose opinions, adopted at random, could not convince people who were capable of reasoning; they, therefore, followed the method of Socrates, who maintained nothing that was doubtful. Arcesilas, who was founder of the *Middle Academy*, went from one extreme to another. He seemed to doubt of every thing; and suspended his judgment upon all subjects as if there was no such thing as truth in the world. The *New Academy*, founded by Carneades, followed a system, which, in appearance, was not so extravagant, but, in the end, amounted to almost the same thing. He acknowledged that there were truths, but so obscure, and confounded with so many errors, that they could not be discerned with any degree of certainty; and thus his followers were permitted to act from probabilities, provided they affirmed nothing positively. There was at least modesty in this philosophy. What a multitude of errors and contentions would have been prevented, if doubts had not been extended to those principles which have been best established by reason and sentiment!

Antisthenes chief of the Cynics.

At the time that Plato was reasoning with more pomp than solidity, Antisthenes, another

disciple of Socrates, founded the sect of the Cynics, so celebrated for the austerity of its maxims, and the audacity of its followers. Being content with only a cloak, a wallet, and a staff, for their whole property, they seemed to think themselves entitled to censure all the rest of the world. Antisthenes made happiness to consist solely in virtue. Upon being asked, of what use was his philosophy to him? he replied, *To keep me in friendship with myself.* A priest initiating him in the mysteries of Orpheus, and praising the happiness of a future state, he bluntly said, *Wherefore do you not die then?* He was a sour misanthrope, more likely to make virtue detested by his harshness, than loved by his example.

Diogenes.

The famous Diogenes of Sinope, who was banished from his country for making counterfeit money, insisted upon being one of his disciples. Antisthenes rejected him, and even threatened to strike him. *Strike*, said the enthusiastic proselyte, *but you will not find a staff sufficiently strong to make me withdraw, while you are to be heard.* Diogenes took the wallet, and, foregoing every thing, lived in a cask, where he declared open war against vice, without respect of persons. He was answered sometimes by having stones thrown at him; at others, by throwing bones to him as to a surly dog, which only served to make him more bold and insolent. *I tread the pride of Plato under my feet*, said he, one day. *Yes*, replied that philosopher, *but it is with another kind of pride.* Such a system of philosophy was at bottom nothing better than an insult to humanity. Of the many maxims which have been ascribed to Dioge-

nes, the following seems the most remarkable: *Choose good people for your friends, that they may encourage you to do what is right; and the wicked for enemies, that they may hinder you from being wicked.* Phocion was reckoned among the number of his disciples, but that great man knew how to temper his wisdom.

Crates and Hipparchia.

Crates, another Cynic, sold a very rich patrimony, and, throwing the money into the sea, cried out, *Now I am free.* He was ugly and deformed; yet Hipparchia, the sister of an Athenian orator, notwithstanding the dissuasions of her whole family, would be married to him, and, to render herself more worthy of that happiness, assumed the staff and wallet. Such a sect could not fail to produce enthusiasts, and very soon to degenerate into licentiousness, like every system which carries ideas of virtue, principles, or duty to extravagance.

Zeno and the Stoics.

Zeno, born at Citium, in the isle of Cyprus, was a disciple of Crates, and founder of the sect of the Stoics. He had formerly been a merchant; but having been shipwrecked, an accident upon which he often congratulated himself, took the opportunity of commencing the study of philosophy at Athens. His system of morals was, at bottom, the same with that of the Cynics, but stript of the indecent exterior which made it so censured. The Stoics confounded the Divinity with the material world, of which, according to their doctrine, he was the soul diffused over all. To extricate themselves from the objections against a Providence, they alleged, that Nature had executed every thing in the best manner possible, with such elements as existed. This is, in a degree, the

system of optimism; but they added a fatality, which is inconsistent with the doctrine of a Providence. They maintained, that virtue is the supreme good; that it makes mankind happy, though surrounded with misfortunes, and even that afflictions are not an evil; in one word, that a life of reason constituted happiness.

The sage of the Stoics.

The true sage of the Stoics was an accomplished man, who was not to be affected by the passions, and even insensible to pity, which distresses the soul, though at the same time devoted to discharge all the duties of humanity. The Peripatetics, who were not such enthusiasts, seeing man composed of soul and body, condescended to make some allowance for the feeling of bodily pleasure and pain, which are natural to humanity; but the enthusiasm of the Stoics raised them above the calls of nature.

Opinion of Stoicism by Montesquieu.

'If I could cease but for one moment to think that I am a Christian,' says Montesquieu, 'I could not help reckoning the destruction of the sect of Zeno among the misfortunes which have befallen mankind. They carried nothing to excess but what served to elevate the mind of man, by teaching him to despise both pain and pleasure. The Stoics alone knew how to form good citizens or great men.' * Plutarch judiciously observes, that the doctrine of the Stoics was dangerous for a warm temper prone to excess; but in a mild, steady disposition, it worked wonders. *One part of valuable knowledge*, according to Zeno, *is to be ignorant of what we ought not to know.* † This maxim is a sufficient encomium on Zeno. Cleanthes, Chrysip-

* Esprit des Loix, liv. 24. † Life of Cleomenes.

pus, Panætius, and Epictetus, have done less credit to Stoicism, than the virtues of Cato, Antoninus, and Marcus Aurelius.

Democritus. A very different sect had for a long time existed without being much known, till it became celebrated by means of Epicurus. Democritus, of the city of Abdera, in Thrace, who died in the year three hundred and sixty-one before Jesus Christ, was its founder. This philosopher had learnt the doctrine of a vacuum and of atoms from Leucippus. The knowledge which he acquired during a long course of travel, with his profound contemplations on nature, rendered him one of the most learned men in the world. The inhabitants of Abdera seeing him laugh at every thing, for to him human life was a perpetual comedy, sent Hippocrates to cure him of what they thought madness; but the physician was not deceived, and told them, that none were so mad as they who thought themselves the most wise and of soundest judgment. None of this philosopher's works are extant.

Epicurus and his disciples. Epicurus, who was born in Attica about three hundred and forty-two years before our era, brought the doctrine of Democritus into vogue. He taught that the world was formed by an accidental assemblage of atoms; that the gods did not interfere in natural events, nor in human affairs; and that the soul and body perished together. He made happiness, or the supreme good, to consist in pleasure; by which he meant those pleasures of the mind which are the fruits of virtue, and suppose a life of temperance. His own life is a proof of his sentiments on that head, since he eat nothing but

pulse in his delightful garden, and drank only water. He constantly attended the temples, either out of submission to the laws and customs of his country, or to prevent his being accused of impiety. He had a zealous regard for the welfare of the public, and recommended obedience, saying, *That it is a duty to wish for good princes, and submit even to bad.* His uncommon patience during a most painful disorder, with the attachment and veneration of his disciples, ought to serve as a refutation of those calumnies with which his memory has been loaded. His morals have been defended by Origen, St Gregory of Nazianza, and some others of the fathers. His life was a life of prudence, though his doctrine cannot be approved; which, faulty as it is, was greatly abused by succeeding Epicureans, who, for the pleasures of virtue, substituted those of sense; and, believing neither in a providence nor a future state, gave a free scope to all their passions.

Eleatic sect. Pyrrhonism.

From the Eleatic sect, of which were Parmenides, Zeno of Elea, Leucippus, Democritus, and others, sprung Pyrrhonism and Atheism. Pyrrho, of Elis in Peloponnesus, rejected all truths as uncertain, and taught his followers to believe, that justice or injustice depended solely upon laws and customs: to live or die was the same thing. *Wherefore do you not then die?* said some person to him; *precisely*, said he, *because there is no difference between lifea nd death.* Having been rallied one day upon his running away from a dog, he extricated himself, by saying, *It is difficult for a man to get the better of his natural timidity.* Pyrrhonism is too ridiculous to have

followers. Men's natural feelings raise insuperable obstructions to such subtilties.

Protagoras and Diagoras.

Atheism, on the contrary, is capable of producing the greatest mischief by attacking a truth, which, though it does not fall immediately under our senses, is, nevertheless, the best support of morals. Protagoras, a disciple of Democritus, having used this expression in one of his books, *I cannot say whether there are any gods or not;* the Athenians caused his works to be burnt, and drove him out of the city. Diagoras openly denied the existence of a Deity. The Athenians summoned him to be tried, but he made his escape; upon which a reward of a talent was promised to whoever killed him, or two talents to any one that would bring him alive. What state could tolerate an error so fatal to the happiness of the human race? Yet, let us remember, that the Athenians put to death the pious Socrates as an atheist, and let us not confound the abuses of superstition with the well-founded complaints of insulted religion.

The philosophers accused of impiety.

The more the Grecian theology was absurd, the greater the merit of the philosophers, who endeavoured to dispel the delusions by sound reason; since they had so much to dread from the madness of the populace, excited by the hatred of the priests. These would have it that the sun was Apollo, and the moon Diana; because, otherwise, the temples of Diana and Apollo would have been stript of a great share of their wealth: they, therefore, accused those philosophers of impiety, who, in the universe, saw nothing but an Infinite Intelligence and the

natural phenomena. Besides, the philosophers were less acquainted with the nature of the Deity than the common people are now, who have the advantage of being enlightened by a Christian revelation. I speak of those people only who have been taught by men truly worthy of the priesthood.

It seems, after all, that the speculative philosophy of the Greeks has produced scarcely any thing but errors and disputes; because, instead of having recourse to experiment, they erected systems, and dreamed when they ought to have been employed in making observations. A taste for sophistry and ill-founded subtilties, pride, and infatuation, became common to all the different sects, from whence those multitudes of follies and chimeras have proceeded which have been handed down to modern times.

GEOMETRY. ASTRONOMY. GEOGRAPHY.

Geometry. NEVERTHELESS they cultivated geometry, a science which, being purely demonstrative, is so well calculated to give the mind a disrelish to all doubtful opinions. Pythagoras taught it to his disciples; and it was made use of by Anaxagoras, Plato, Aristotle, &c. Euclid of Alexandria, whose Elements will ever be held in the highest estimation, brought it to perfection about three hundred years before Jesus Christ.

Archimedes. Had Archimedes lived in our days, he would have been another Newton. The machines which he made use of against the Romans at the siege of Syracuse, were, in his eye, mere trifles in comparison of his scientific discoveries. Hav-

not they who have given credit to it been taxed with madness and folly? Was not even the belief of that fact reckoned heresy?

Astronomical observations.

It was by astronomical observations that Aristotle came to know the size and figure of the earth; the roundness of its shade in the eclipses of the moon; the inequalities of the meridional heights, according to the climates, showed him that it was spherical. Alexandria having become the asylum of the sciences, Eratosthenes was there in the time of Ptolemy Euergetes, and made some new observations for measuring the circumference of the globe; and his cotemporary Hipparchus, in the same place, made a catalogue of the fixed stars, and discovered their particular revolution round the poles of the ecliptic. Pliny called Hipparchus *Nature's confidant.* It was not till the reign of Antoninus that the celebrated Ptolemy gave a complete system of astronomy.

Geography.

Geography, which is connected with that science, since astronomical observations serve to measure the earth, and to fix the situation of different places, could make but very slow progress, and only in proportion as countries were discovered and examined. What is very extraordinary, Homer knew more of geographythan Herodotus; and in the time of Xerxes, the Greeks still believed that it was as far from Ægina to Samos as to the Pillars of Hercules; but navigation cleared up that doubt, and their knowledge was enlarged by means of commerce. This science was greatly extended by the conquests of Alexander, and made still further progress under his successors. Strabo, in the time of Augustus, and Ptolemy after him, made vast

improvements; and the last-mentioned of the two, dedicated his whole study to ascertain the latitude and longitude, without which it is impossible to be exact.

Superiority of the Moderns.

The Ancients were greatly inferior to the Moderns on this subject, as well as in all the sciences which require exact disquisition. Their geography is very erroneous; but indeed how could it be otherwise, since M. Delisle has proved, by astronomical observations, that there are very many important mistakes in the best modern maps? He has abridged Asia no less than five hundred leagues; and the Mediterranean sea from east to west, three hundred leagues. It is wonderful how the Ancients, with so few helps, could make such prodigious progress; and how they became either astronomers or geographers, without telescopes, and without the Arabic figures. 'They did,' says the Marquis de l'Hôpital, 'what our men of genius would have done in the same situation; and if they had lived in our time, we may suppose, that they must have had the same views we have.' *

Modern discoveries ascribed to the Ancients.

Some writers have ascribed to the Ancients our most valuable discoveries. The Pythagoreans believed that the earth and the planets moved round the sun. Empedocles, who, according to a ridiculous tradition, threw himself into the crater of mount Etna, ascribed the phenomenon of the Syphon, to the weight of the air, which keeps the water suspended, while the orifice continues to be shut by the finger. The same philosopher imagined a kind of power

* Preface de l'Annalyse des Infinimens petits.

of attraction, very little different from that of Newton. Cicero and Seneca explained the ebbing and flowing of the sea by the pressure of the moon; but these were only conjectures without proof, and systems erected by guess. The honour of the Moderns is to have found the secrets of nature by observation.

MEDICINE.

Medicine. MEDICINE, in some degree necessary, rather from the faults of men than from any defect of nature, was, a short time before the Peloponnesian war, nothing more than practice by rote, and confined to very narrow limits. From the age of Homer, in which, undoubtedly neither ointments nor plasters were known, since he who speaks of the smallest remedies makes no mention of them, we do not find that medicine was improved. If, as Celsus alleges, Pythagoras is ranked among the celebrated physicians, it must probably be owing to his vague reputation of being an universal genius. Herophilus, who lived five hundred and seventy years before Christ, seems to have acquired some knowledge. We are told that he obtained leave to dissect alive, those criminals who were condemned to suffer death; and if we may depend upon the authority of Tertullian, he dissected no less than six hundred. But it is impossible to be believed.

Herodicus. Herodicus of Sicily, the master of the famous Hippocrates, was looked upon as the head of two sects in medicine, which were called the

dietetic and *gymnastic*, whose remedies depended upon diet, regimen, and bodily exercise. He therefore deserved to be looked upon in a superior light to those quacks, who, before his time, vended heaps of hurtful or useless prescriptions.

Hippocrates.

But at last came Hippocrates, who was born in the isle of Cos, about four hundred and sixty years before our era. If we were to question the eminent services which he rendered the Greeks, during the plague of Athens, as mentioned by many historians, yet there is a sufficient number of his works still existing, and always esteemed as masterpieces, to serve for his encomium. He improved his knowledge, by collecting all the remarks of his predecessors, and was himself a better observer than any of them. He thought the most simple remedies the most effectual, and still made as little use of them as possible. The ingenuous confession which he made of some errors, and several useless remedies, prove how much he was superior to blind confidence, and that he esteemed it his greatest honour to be of use to the public. The celebrated Galen, who lived in the time of Marcus Aurelius, looked upon him as his master.

Different sects in medicine.

It is very unfortunate for mankind, that physicians as well as philosophers, have been divided into a variety of rival sects, whose opposite principles lead to contrary practice. The words *empirics*, *dogmatics*, *methodics*, &c. which, suppose a man so wedded to system, that he cannot see diseases but through clouds of prejudice or ignorance, must infallibly inspire people with horror. It was probably from thinking of such

people, that Cato said, *We shall be ruined if the Greeks send us their learning, but more especially if they send us their physicians. They have vowed that, by the means of medicine, they will kill all whom they call barbarians.**

Botany anatomy, &c.

Botany, indispensably necessary to medicine, was still in its infancy. Dioscorides and Pliny scarcely knew six hundred plants. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, more than six thousand were known; and since that time this science is greatly improved, by the introduction of method. Medical chemistry is a modern science, derived from the Arabs. It was only in the later ages, that any improvement could be made in anatomy, when superstition no longer opposed the dissection of human bodies; and by this means, surgery and pharmacy, which at present are separate studies from physic, of which they formerly made a part, have acquired an astonishing degree of perfection, totally unknown to the Ancients. But the bodily exercises, such as wrestling, playing quoit, horse-racing, those games wherein the Greeks were so anxious to distinguish themselves, the military exercises, which made a part of the duty of every citizen; in a word, activity and sobriety, were worth all other remedies.

ECONOMICS.

Economics much neglected.

A Science of much importance to government, too little studied by the Greeks, or at least

* Plin. l. xxix.

greatly neglected by their writers, is that of economy. We scarcely know any thing of their finances, how they were administered, their principles upon this subject, and a number of interesting details, in themselves more useful, than the many with which their histories have been swelled. Learned as the Athenians were, they always seem to have preferred the plausible to the solid. Their philosophers, except a very few, employed their whole time in vague speculations, and fine discourses upon general subjects, and contemning that, which, if added to the laws and manners of the country, must be the foundation of happiness to the people. The many systems on the origin of the world, and on the chief good, could neither make mankind more wise, nor states more flourishing. Is the imaginary republic of Plato to be compared with some good precepts suited to common life, or on the government of kingdoms?

Xenophon has left us two treatises; the one entitled, *Economics;* the other, *Of the Revenue.* The first treats of private economy, the second on the finances of Athens. These valuable morsels, though written only superficially, are well worthy of perusal. The author highly praises domestic cares, particularly agriculture, and with great reason, though without conveying much instruction upon the subject; he does not even mention grafting. According to him, the art consists in attending to the operations of nature; and he says, that the failure in the cultivation of lands, is not owing to ignorance, but to idleness. This maxim, though in general true, must be false and pernicious, if it debarred people from making new attempts. Not-

Economics of Xenophon.

withstanding the praise bestowed on ancient customs, have they not been in many cases usefully corrected, and how much may they not be still improved? It must be allowed at the same time, that industry will do more than every thing else. Let us therefore promote the love of it, for the conveniencies which it affords; it is the great secret of making the earth fertile.

His treatise on the revenue.

His treatise upon the means of increasing the *revenue* of Attica is more curious, because it presents to our attention some things which are not so much known. Without repeating what I have said elsewhere, I shall only lay before you some of his opinions, which are worthy of a particular examination. He is chiefly attached to commerce, which is the natural resource of a barren country. He insists upon the eminent advantages Athens derived from its situation, which he greatly exaggerates, as he would have it considered not only as the centre of Greece, but of the universe. He very properly recommends to them to try every means of alluring strangers to settle among them, for their industry and their wealth must bring certain advantages. Every foreigner paid a tax of twelve drachmæ. *Let us*, says Xenophon, *put them in a situation to love and serve us.* He shows the necessity of lightening all the clogs of commerce, but more particularly to shorten lawsuits which retard business and keep strangers at a distance. He proposes to build market-places, storehouses, and merchant ships, and shows the advantage which must be derived from such proceedings; enterprises greatly superior to those of luxury and orna-

ment, which sometimes bring on the ruin of nations.

On the subject of exploring mines, he maintains, *that silver does not resemble the other productions of the earth, and that the great plenty of it does not lower its price; that gold, if it was to be in greater plenty than silver, would raise the price of silver, and lower its own.* The last proposition is probable; but if the abundance of silver does not lower its price, does it not increase the price of commodities? does it not require more money to support life, and is not that the same thing as if the price of silver was lowered? The plenty of gold or silver.

If we were to judge from this work of Xenophon, the Athenians were but indifferently acquainted with finances or political economy. Some individuals were made rich by working mines, while that valuable resource was totally neglected by the state. The author proposes a method to reconcile the interest of individuals with that of the public. He prudently observes, that every thing ought not be undertaken at once, and that in all enterprises the means should be proportioned to the end; that the success of a first trial makes a second more easy, which, in course, promotes every succeeding attempt. He seems to be particularly fond of one chimerical idea; the erecting a body of magistrates, whose duty it should be to preserve a perpetual peace; but he at the same time tells them, that *the most certain method of conquering their enemies, is to make none.* He concludes with advising them to consult the oracles, to know whether heaven approves their projects, and what god they should pray to for Working of mines.

protection. Could it have been conceived that a philosopher believed that oracles were necessary in any business relating to the finances? Undoubtedly, he did this in compliance with the superstitious weakness of the people.

The theory of the finances more necessary at present.

If the Greeks formed no good theory upon this subject, with which modern nations are so much engaged, it is because they had not so great reason for directing their attention to that object. Their wars were not so expensive, which was owing to the troops commonly coming home at the end of a campaign, and to their armies being few in number, and seldom composed of mercenaries. Besides, their fleet, which was the chief strength of Athens, was of no great expense to the republic. By a law of Solon, the twelve hundred richest citizens were divided into seventy-five companies of sixteen, each of which provided a galley, to be alternatively commanded by the sixteen. As many disputes arose about who were the richest, Demosthenes procured another law to be passed, by which it was decreed, that every member of the state whose property amounted to ten talents, should be obliged to equip one galley; two galleys if he had twenty talents; and they whose fortunes did not amount to ten, should join with others to defray that expense. Athens, with such resources, in case of necessity, by the help of industry and commerce, could support herself, without the economical science of the moderns, to which her neighbours were equally strangers. It was vice, and not the want of money, which brought on the ruin of that state.

It seemed to me to be of no consequence to

enter into these particulars, on purpose to show the lengths which the human mind was capable of attaining, and the point at which its powers stopped, in a nation that was to instruct the mistress of the world. Rome comes next to present another kind of view for our consideration. Courage, poverty, virtue, and ambition, contributed all their powers to raise her to the highest pitch of worldly grandeur, before the arts and sciences, entering in the train of riches, made her the rival of Athens,—Athens, which was doomed to be her instructress, and to receive her laws.

ELEMENTS

OF

GENERAL HISTORY.

ANCIENT HISTORY.

PART THIRD.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Though I begin the Modern History at the time that the French monarchy was established, which happened near the end of the fifth century, yet the Roman, *which makes the most essential part of the Ancient History, comprised in this work, does not conclude till the establishment of Mahometism in the seventh century. I thought it was proper to follow the chain of events till that period, from which the total declension of the Roman Empire may be dated; which was greatly hastened in the East, by the rapid conquests gained by the Arabs.*

HISTORY OF THE ROMANS.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

Plan of this history.

As the Roman history, if we may use the expression, absorbs that of all other nations, and introduces a long chain of actions which reach down to modern history; the better to note the continuation and connexion of the principal events, we shall divide it into epochas, taking care, as far as possible, to distinguish each epocha, not only by some remarkable fact, but by an idea which has an affinity with the space of time it comprehends.

The early history of Rome doubtful.

The early ages of Rome, like those of other countries, are involved in darkness and uncertainty. Fabius Pictor, who was the first writer of Roman history, lived in the time of the second Punic war, more than five hundred years after the foundation of the city. At a time when the minds of the people were blinded by ignorance; when superstition gave credit to every idle tale; when writing was an accomplishment rarely to be met with; and when the memoirs of the priesthood were only records of

miracles, what multitudes of fables ought we not to expect? Even these Memoirs, if we trust to the authority of Livy, were destroyed by the irruption of the Gauls; and from thence such heaps of absurd traditions and wonders, accumulated without the least shadow of probability, were handed down by different historians; but Rome thought she was of divine origin, and therefore adopted whatever tended to flatter these prejudices.

Some traditions which deserve credit.

In the *Memoirs of the Academy of Belles-Lettres and Inscriptions*,* may be read the dissertations of M. de Pouilly and the Abbé Sallier, upon the history of the first four ages; in which whatever is maintained by the one is denied by the other. The contest between these two learned men seems to lead to Pyrrhonism; but the judicious observer will endeavour to find the medium, and reject whatever he thinks absurd or incredible, without denying those truths which he may find intermixed with fables. Except those facts of which we ourselves have been witnesses, as M. Ferret observes,† there is no certainty in history but what arises from the dependence we have upon the evidence of others, and therefore the whole is, in some degree, no better than tradition. Unwritten reports are certainly weaker than the other; yet the certainty of public and important events, which the memory of man is capable of easily retaining, may still be preserved. Should the improbable circumstances, which are sometimes added for that reason destroy every truth? At this rate we must disbelieve all our cotemporaries who have related similar wonders. Besides,

* Vol. VI. † Ibid.

some memorials from which the Roman historians derived their information are still subsisting; but it is of importance for us to take nothing from their narrations but what ought to be remembered.

Our plan necessarily makes us avoid chronological discussions, which are an endless subject of uninteresting disputes. If the date of the foundation of Rome is uncertain, it varies only a few years. The most probable opinion fixes it at the beginning of the fourth year of the sixth Olympiad; five hundred and seventy-three years before Jesus Christ; about a hundred and twenty years after the time when Lycurgus established his laws; and a hundred and forty before the Athenians received those of Solon; fourteen years before the era of Nabonassar, that time, as we formerly observed, in which the learned moderns fix the execution of those magnificent works at Babylon, which were ascribed by the ancients to Semiramis. It is a common custom to give both the date of the year of Rome and of the year before the Christian era; but, to prevent the confusion of figures, I shall only give the first, which it is easy to connect with the second, by subtracting from 753, the number which expresses the date of Rome, and the difference will express the number of years before the Christian era.

Date of the foundation of Rome.

FIRST EPOCH.

THE FOUNDATION OF ROME, COMPREHENDING THE PERIOD OF THE KINGS, A SPACE OF TWO HUNDRED AND FORTY-FOUR YEARS.

ROMULUS.

Romulus, the founder of Rome.

NOTWITHSTANDING the greatness at which Rome arrived, the Romans were infected with that contemptible vanity, the disgrace of other ancient nations, which made them introduce something wonderful into the history of their origin. They were desirous to have it believed that they were the descendants of Æneas; that the god Mars was the father of Romulus, the founder of their city, and that he was miraculously suckled by a she-wolf. Amidst these absurdities, we can trace Romulus at the head of a numerous banditti, the murderer of his brother, building huts in a part of the territory of the city of Alba, and, with the assistance of about three thousand men, laying the foundation of a state which was afterwards to swallow up the most powerful kingdoms. We find him increasing the number of his subjects, by offering an asylum to thieves and robbers, and every kind of profligate who was willing to sub-

mit to his power. The Sabines refused to let them have women for the purpose of population. He therefore instituted games that he might seduce them into his city, and, by force of arms, seized upon their daughters to have wives for his soldiers. If we trace back most empires to their source, we shall find the same kind of robberies and violence.

Policy of Romulus.

If Romulus had been nothing more than an enterprising adventurer, undoubtedly the neighbouring people would have destroyed his city in its infancy; but he had political views; and it was by establishing good laws, as well as by the power of his arms, that he accomplished his purpose. From its origin, the government of Rome affords a subject worthy of the most serious attention. Agreeable to the character and customs of all uncivilized people, it was a mixt monarchy, in which the choice of a king did not limit the freedom of the people. Romulus, when elected to that dignity, was convinced that the people would not remain in subjection, and that they must either have a share in the government, or that he himself must renounce it altogether. He, therefore, divided his colony into three tribes, and each tribe into ten curiæ. He then divided the lands into three unequal portions. The first was for the support of religion, the next for the wants of the state, and the third for the citizens, to each of whom was given two *jugera* * of land. In the next place, he established a senate, composed of a hundred persons, whose duty it was to see that the laws were observed; to deliberate upon affairs of

* The jugerum contained two roods 18 poles, 250,05 feet English square measure, something more than half an acre.

importance, and to report these deliberations to the comitia, or assemblies of the people, to whom the supreme power of deciding belonged; yet it was necessary that their decisions should be approved by the senate. The command of the army, the convocation of the comitia and senate, the judging of the most important causes, and the dignity of sovereign pontiff, belonged to the king.

Romulus preserved the power in his own hands.

By this mixing of three powers, Romulus knew how to please the people, and at the same time to gratify his own ambition. As the members were of his own choice, he could easily command the senate; and, to keep the people in dependence, the military power, the religion, and the distribution of justice, were retained in his own hands; and though he gave up to them the chief powers of sovereignty, the making laws, and choosing magistrates, the determining peace or war, he so preserved the means of directing their votes, that, in fact, he was entire master of every thing. Twelve lictors were appointed as a guard to his person, which is an usual appendage of royalty, to whom he afterwards added a military corps, consisting of three hundred men, whose duty it was to fight either on foot or horseback. This was the origin of the knights, at first called *Celeres*.

Patrons and clients an excellent institution.

To prevent dissensions between the senate and people, Romulus made a law, at least it has been ascribed to him, which greatly contributed to the prosperity of Rome. Every plebeian was allowed to choose one of the senators as his patron, and their reciprocal duties united the patrons and the clients. The senator protected his clients, who,

in their turn, supported him in cases of necessity; and these ties of humanity inspired the whole with a love of concord and moderation; so that, during the first troubles which were excited by the jealousy of the different ranks after the establishment of the republic, there was no shedding of blood. The union of the citizens is the best security for the happiness of society; but if the lower people are regarded in the eyes of the great as little better than nothing, the multitude will be either rebellious or oppressed.

Barbarous laws in favour of husbands and fathers.

Uncivilized nations have but few laws, and even those few are tinctured with barbarity, of which I shall quote only two instances in the laws of Romulus. The first gave leave to husbands to divorce their wives, and even to put them to death, not only for being guilty of great crimes, but for having drank wine; the women, on the contrary, were prohibited from withdrawing from their husbands upon any pretence whatever. The second, or *patria potestas*, made fathers absolute over their children; they might sell them even to the third time, and at any age. What was still more, they might put them to death, and, provided they took the opinion of five neighbours, they might expose children who were born excessively deformed. Nor did the law compel them to take care of their younger daughters.

Romulus desirous to gain territories and subjects.

The principal objects which engaged the attention of Romulus were to procure people and territories. He is looked upon by many as the author of the Roman policy, which was always attentive either to form new alliances, or to gain conquests, on purpose to improve and strength-

en the state. He chiefly attended to the carrying on war, either with a view of aggrandizing himself, or to employ the attention of his unruly subjects upon distant objects.

Italy, like ancient Greece, was at that time divided into a number of petty states, composed of people, who resembled one another in nothing but a ferocious courage. In the course of a long space of time, Rome went to war with all of them in succession. By reflecting upon their origin, it must be evident, that neither the sieges nor battles in which they were then engaged, whatever might be the future consequences, could deserve those pompous descriptions that have been handed down to us by some historians.

Year of Rome 8. Tatius the colleague of Romulus.

It was against the Sabines that the prowess of this new colony was first employed. They formed a kind of confederate republic, that their united forces might appear formidable; yet, however, some of their towns were obliged to submit; but one of their princes, Tatius king of Curæ, penetrated even into Rome, and probably would have destroyed it, if the Sabine women, who had been carried off by the Romans, had not procured a peace to be concluded between their husbands and their parents. From that time the two states were united at the expense of the power of Romulus, who was obliged to give Tatius an equal share of the royalty, and to admit a hundred of the principal Sabines into the senate. His colleague being assassinated about six years after the union, he so managed matters that no successor was appointed.

After a series of victories, which produced an increase of inhabitants, by constantly admitting the vanquished to be of their number, the king, depending upon the affection of his soldiers, and reckoning forty-seven thousand subjects, gave himself up too much to his love of dominion, and attempted to govern without the help of the senate. The senators therefore conspired against him, and caused him to be privately assassinated; but, to conceal the deed, they gave out that Romulus was carried up into heaven; and from that time, during an interregnum which continued a year, they alternately exercised the royal authority, Romulus having reigned thirty-seven years.

Romulus assassinated.

NUMA.

The people, tired with obeying so many kings, at last constrained the senate to come to an election. That body, being composed equally of Romans and Sabines, both parties contended for the sovereignty; but, to accommodate matters, it was agreed that the Romans should choose, and that their choice should fall upon a Sabine. Numa Pompilius, who lived a retired life in the country, and was by no means solicitous of honours, appeared to them to be the man, either the most capable of governing, or the least calculated to inspire the people with a dread of his command. He was therefore chosen, and, unwillingly, accepted a power which he much less valued than dedicating his time to the study of wisdom. We cannot conceive from

Year of Rome 38. Numa chosen king.

whence he could have derived this taste for philosophy.

Numa preserves peace.

Numa was as great a lover of peace as Romulus had been of war. He considered that it was important to soften the manners of an untractable people, who, not being as yet corrupted, were in the best state for receiving benefit from the introduction of a good body of laws. When manners are formed by the laws, they in some degree tend to support what gave them birth. Their reciprocal influence was the glory of Sparta. Rome likewise felt the benefit; and from that cause chiefly she became entitled to the highest encomiums.

He attaches himself to religion.

Piety, and the art of governing, two qualities rarely to be met with in one person, were found united in Numa, both of them equally proving the rule of his conduct. He made it believed that he was inspired, pretending that he had frequent conferences with the nymph Ægeria; and, by this artifice, infused those sentiments of religion into the minds of the people with which he himself was affected. The new king made use of religion as the chief instrument by which he subjected the inflexible character of the Romans to a sense of their duty. He took care to have a dread of the Invisible Being, who sees and punishes offences, deeply engraven upon their hearts. To render promises sacred, he erected an altar to *Honesty;* and, that the boundaries of the people's possessions might be inviolable, he established a festival in honour of the god *Terminus.* He instituted religious ceremonies; because at the foot of the altars the hearts of men become united, and, without them, the Divinity makes but slender impres-

sion upon the minds of the vulgar. He divided the priests into several classes, the chief of which was that of the pontiffs. The grand pontiff presided universally; and this important office being one of the main hinges of government, belonged to the sovereign.

The first religion of the Romans probably Celtic.

According to the conjecture of a modern author,* the Romans were a mixture of Sabines, Latins, and Tuscans, all of whom were of Celtic origin; and therefore their first religion was probably Celtic, very different from what it became afterwards by the introduction of the Greek deities into Rome, in opposition to a law of Romulus, which forbid the admission of strange gods. The Celtæ had no images, and, according to Plutarch, the Romans had none till a hundred and sixty years after the foundation of the city. The Celtæ honoured fire, and applied to the art of augury. Accordingly, in the time of Numa, we find the Romans attending to augury, and a temple erected to the goddess Vesta, and vestals established for preserving the sacred fire. This institution of virgins, consecrated to the religious services, is the more remarkable, as the obligation to preserve their virginity, though not shut up in cloisters, could not be violated, but at the risk of their being buried alive. These virgins were highly respected; and, though free to marry, after thirty years service in the temple, they commonly preferred the honour of the priesthood, which must have either been owing to the constraint being softened by habit, or to their having by that time passed the age of pleasures, or that

Institution of vestals.

* Pelloutier's History of the Celtæ.

they were attached to the altar from motives of ambition, or a love of piety. There were never more than six vestals.

The Feciales.

The establishment of the *Feciales*, an order of priests whose duty it was to decide upon the justice of going to war, and to watch over the faithful observance of treaties of peace, was a most useful institution, likewise ascribed to Numa. They declared war, by calling heaven to witness the injustice of their enemies, and pronouncing imprecations against Rome, if she had been guilty of an act of injustice to the enemy; which was a most necessary restraint on the minds of a warlike ambitious people. Varro takes notice, that the Romans looked upon war with an eye of piety, and therefore never entered into it, but with the most calm deliberation and temper. But did not a secret thirst of conquest make them colour over numberless instances of injustice? We shall see them display their character in time, and, resting upon motives of religion, or the pretence of it, look upon the whole world as a prey destined for them by heaven. The most religious men are easily seduced by interest, which often makes religion the instrument of accomplishing their iniquitous purposes.

Numa inspires a love of agriculture.

Numa likewise introduced agriculture, as a source of virtue and happiness to his people, and for that purpose distributed among them the lands, of which a conquest had been made in the former reign. He erected villages, where the husbandmen were employed in useful labours, and appointed inspectors to reward industry and punish idleness. It was by this means that agriculture became such a respectable em-

ployment among the Romans. The first men of Rome found their greatest pleasure in rural pursuits, and the state was never in a more glorious situation, than when they returned to the plough immediately after a triumph.

A national jealousy between the Romans and Sabines left the seeds of discord in the city; but it is said that Numa found means for their being destroyed. The people being divided into bodies of different professions, and into communities, which had each their distinct privileges, they forgot all difference of country, and from that time were only attached to their particular class; with this advantage over the same arrangement in Egypt, that the classes were not separated, so as either to occasion aversion, or to stifle rising genius.

Trades incorporated to unite the Romans and Sabines.

Numa likewise had the honour of introducing science for the public advantage. The year, in the time of Romulus, consisted only of ten months; but he substituted the lunar year of twelve months, which, by intercalations, he brought near to the solar. This is what has been advanced by historians; but I cannot conceive from whence he derived so much knowledge amidst an uncivilized people. The Athenians had scarcely any idea of astronomy, while here we find a Sabine astronomer.

New calendar.

A very extraordinary law, which gave leave to husbands to lend their wives, after having had children by them, was ascribed to Numa. It was a custom in Sparta, perfectly consistent with the purity of morals which subsisted at that time, because their sole purpose was to procure good citizens for the state, without being acquainted with those sublime ideas of

Husbands allowed to lend their wives.

marriage, which we have derived from religion.

The death of Numa.

Numa died after a peaceable r ign of forty-three years. The wisdom of his laws, and the knowledge which he had of a Supreme Being, made him be looked upon as a disciple of Pythagoras, though that philosopher did not appear till the reign of the last Tarquin. In the year of Rome five hundred and seventy-two, some books of Numa were found in a chest, which contained his religious sentiments. Petillius the prætor having read them, declared to the senate that they were dangerous, because they did not agree with the established religion; upon which, the senate ordered them to be burnt. Supposing this to be a fact, it is a proof that superstition had changed the religion of the first Romans, and was supported by the nobles from views of interest.

His books upon religion burnt.

TULLUS HOSTILIUS.

Year of Rome 83. Tullus Hostilius.

Tullus Hostilius was chosen to succeed Numa, and began his reign with dividing a part of the royal domain among those who had no lands; and having thus gained the hearts of the people, he revived their military ardour, which so long a peace could not extinguish. The jealousy of the Albans, who contended with Rome for pre-eminence, lighted up the flame of war; which they agreed to decide, by a very extraordinary combat of three champions named by each party. On the Roman side, one of the Horatii having conquered three Curiatii, determined the superiority in favour of

his country. The story of his having killed his sister, who bewailed the death of one of the Curiatii, her intended husband, is well known. Tullus caused him to be tried by two commissioners, and advised him to appeal to the people from their sentence. Thus the people were acknowledged to be the ultimate judges.

The manner in which Livy has described these events, and the fine speeches he has embellished them with, make the whole appear rather a composition of fancy than a genuine history. That admirable writer, in handling the traditions of antiquity, like the Greeks, gave ample scope to his imagination, and has been too closely imitated both by Rollin, and other modern authors. Is it reasonable to expect, that orations composed with so much skill, were to be found in the bosom of barbarity? Even the combat of the six champions is much to be doubted, and seems to be copied from the Greek history.

Alba destroyed. Death of Tullus.

Suffetius, the Alban general, being found guilty of treachery, was torn in pieces by order of Tullus. The city of Alba, which was said to have lasted five hundred years, was totally destroyed in one hour, and the inhabitants transplanted to Rome, where the principal of them were admitted into the senate; and the lands became part of the Roman territories. Tullus defeated all his neighbours who ventured to take up arms against him; but during the havock of a dreadful plague, he could not resist the attacks of superstition, which is commonly the effect of fear. Some authors seriously report, that Jupiter struck him with light-

ning while he was performing some magical rites; but it is supposed that he was assassinated.

ANCUS MARTIUS.

Year of Rome 113. Ancus Martius.

ANCUS MARTIUS, the grandson of Numa by his mother, received the crown from the united voice of the senate and people. He showed himself the worthy descendant of his grandfather, to whose eminent virtues he added the courage of Romulus. His first attention was directed to the care of religion and agriculture. The Latins, considering him as a weak prince, treated him with contempt, and committed some hostilities, which interrupted his pacific pursuits. He therefore sent to demand satisfaction, which being refused, war was declared against them by the *Fecialis* in the name of the people, and by the following form, in which the king is not mentioned. *Because of the injury done by the Latins to the people of Rome, the Roman people and I declare war against the Latins; and now we begin.* At these words, the Fecialis threw a javelin steeped in blood, into the territories of the enemy. Ancus acquired honour, and Rome advantage by this war, and some others which followed.

Useful works by Ancus.

Nothing does so much honour to a warlike prince, as, immediately after victory, engaging in pursuits which are of importance to the good of the people. Independent of his exploits in arms, the works of Ancus were sufficient to have rendered his name immortal. He added Mount Aventine and Mount Janiculum, which were formerly in the Tuscan territories, to the

inclosure of the city, which till that time did not extend beyond the Palatine Mount; and built a bridge over the Tiber, to preserve the communication between the city and the Janiculum. He likewise built the port of Ostia, at the mouth of the river, and caused salt-pits to be dug upon the sea-shore, distributing a great part of the salt which was got from them among the people. Similar distributions of of corn, oil, &c. which were called *congiaria*, afterwards became a common practice, and introduced abuses, which we shall have occasion to observe in another place. He built a prison, which licentiousness, the natural consequence of an increase of inhabitants, made necessary. This prince died after a glorious reign of twenty-four years.

TARQUIN THE ELDER.

Year of Rome 137. Tarquin the Elder obtains the crown.

TARQUIN, surnamed the Elder, the fifth king of Rome, acquired the crown by means of canvassing among the people, which was a practice till his time totally unknown. He was the son of a rich merchant of Corinth, was born at Tarquinii in Tuscany, and settled in Rome, from an expectation that his being a foreigner would be no obstruction to his desire of obtaining honours; for which purpose he changed his name of Lucumo into that of Tarquinius, borrowed from the place of his nativity. Substantial merit, supported by wealth and skilful policy, with the favour of Ancus, procured for him a place in the senate. Ancus, when dying, appointed him tutor to his two sons, the el-

dest of whom was not as yet fifteen years old. Though the crown was not hereditary, yet respect for the last king might have determined the suffrages of the people in favour of his family; but Tarquin, without having the least regard for his pupils, openly solicited for the sovereignty, and gained such influence over the minds of the people, that, either by persuasion, or some other means, they ordered him *to take charge of public affairs*, that is to say, made him king.

Increases the number of senators.

To increase his influence in the senate, as well as to reward his party, he created a hundred new senators from the plebeian families, *patres minorum gentium*. He still more gained the populace, by building a circus for public games, after the model of the Greeks. Most people love shows, and we may be secure of pleasing them, by contributing to their amusement.

The number of citizens increased.

The Latins, the Tuscans, and the Sabines, who always quarrelled with Rome, but did not think of acting in conjunction, successively felt the effects of the valour of the new king. He knew how to improve his victories, by incorporating the conquered people with the citizens of Rome, as had been the practice of his predecessors. He likewise instituted the pompous ceremony of a triumph, which became a powerful incentive to emulation, though to him it was only a means of procuring respect to his person.

Buildings by Tarquin.

Those ideas of the grand, which are so calculated to produce noble effects, had already sprung up at Rome, and the works of Tarquin were prodigies of excellence in a barbarous

age. He constructed superb aqueducts and common sewers, piercing through rocks and hills for the convenience of the city. They who judge of the merit of works by their usefulness, will value the sewers of Rome much more than the pompous edifices of Pericles. A waggon loaded with hay could pass under the vault; and eight hundred years after they were constructed, Pliny takes notice of them as objects worthy of admiration. Tarquin likewise built temples, halls for the adminstration of justice, and schools for the education of youth. He levelled the top of the Tarpeian rock, whereon was afterwards erected the Capitol.

Fable of the augur Nævius.

Superstition must have had an incredible influence, even over intelligent minds, since Livy, amidst an account of events deserving a place in history, introduces the story of a flint being cut through with a razor by Accius Nævius the augur, to show that his art was divine. Cicero, though himself an augur, laughs at this ridiculous tradition. Rollin observes, that St. Augustin was inclined to believe it; but the virtuous Rollin might have added, that that was no reason to procure it credit, and that the power of a dæmon might have interposed. A statue having been erected to Nævius, only serves to prove, that the people were deceived by some appearance of a prodigy; that they had given credit to a fable; and that some men in power had a purpose to serve by getting the memory of it preserved.

Foreign superstitions introduced by Tarquin.

The art of foretelling future events by the flight of birds, or some such circumstances, which can have no connexion with futurity, that art of the Tuscans, more senseless than judicial

astrology, became one of the great springs of government at Rome, and one of the chains by which they led the people. Tarquin being of Greek origin, and a Tuscan by birth, probably introduced the Grecian and Tuscan superstitions, because he thought they might be useful to him in carrying on his schemes of government. The simple religion of Numa was greatly changed during this reign, when foreign deities were admitted.

He is assassinated.

This monarch died at the age of fourscore, having been assassinated by the sons of Ancus Martius, who were provoked at seeing him pave the way for his son-in-law Servius Tullius to the succession; but his death was artfully concealed by his wife Tanaquil, until she had secured the crown to Servius. He was a Latin, whose mother was brought captive to Rome, and was educated by the late king with paternal tenderness.

SERVIUS TULLIUS.

Year of Rome 175. Servius Tullius.

SERVIUS having assumed the power without the consent of either senate or people, whatever merit he might have in other respects, it was impossible for him to hope that he could reign in peace over a free people, if he did not by some method supply the want of a legal claim to royalty. By paying the debts of the poor; dividing among them the lands which had been taken possession of by some of the citizens; and lessening the distance between the patricians and plebeians, he gained the people to his interest, which having accomplished, he publicly com-

plained of a conspiracy being formed against his life by the patricians,* and therefore desired, as he was ready to relinquish the throne, that they would elect a new king. The people without hesitation determined in his favour.

New wars.

Following the example of Tarquin, he erected temples to superstition, and gained new conquests from his neighbours. These little republics imagined, that the treaties into which they entered with one king, did not bind them to his successor, and irritated by hatred and jealousy commenced hostilities. Thus new quarrels were perpetually produced, which served to exercise the Roman courage, and to increase the power of the state by new acquisitions, either of people or territory.

Servius attempts some useful innovations.

Though Servius was ambitious, he seemed to dedicate himself entirely to the good of the public. His reign produced some salutary changes which the state very much wanted. The Romans were of a different opinion from some other nations, who imagined that they ought not to make any alterations in government, or to change established customs. Accordingly, they were in a great measure indebted for their prosperity to innovations, which would have enraged the Egyptians, and some enthusiastic philosophers. One of the chief duties of good government, is to reform abuses with prudence; and enough will every where be found, to require reformation.

Two abuses to be reformed.

There were two of very great consequence in Rome. The taxes were paid by the head; and

* The senators were called Fathers *(Patres)*, from whence the name of patrician was derived, by which the nobility of Rome were distinguished.

though there were no longer any remains of the ancient equality of fortune, yet the taxes were continued equal, to the advantage of the rich, and the great oppression of the poor. On the other hand, from the rich having only their single vote in the public assemblies, where every thing was determined by the *majority*, the most important affairs of the state fell into the hands of the multitude, who were easily heated and misled, and therefore apt to run into the excess of Athenian democracy. Servius undertook to extirpate this double source of disorders, and succeeded.

The first step which he took, was to show the public assembly of the people, the great grievances arising from the common mode of imposing the taxes, and the necessity of their being laid on in proportion to the property of individuals. The people being flattered with the hopes of relief, gave him the power of settling such a plan of reformation as he judged proper. This plan, which we are about to see put in execution, has an intimate connexion with history.

Country and city tribes.

The inhabitants of the city were divided into four tribes, answering to the different quarters; and those of the country into fifteen, to which others were afterwards added, so as to make them in all thirty-five. Each of them had their *curiæ*, almost like our parishes, and the priest was called the *Curio*, so that by this method there was no difficulty in ascertaining the number of inhabitants; and at that time they could reckon fourscore thousand citizens able to carry arms. A strict command to give a faithful account of all property, procured every informa-

tion that the king wanted, in order to complete his project.

The whole Roman people was next formed into six classes, which were afterwards subdivided into centuries. The first class consisted of the rich, whose property amounted at least to ten thousand drachmæ, or a hundred thousand *asses* of brass, by which the Romans reckoned at that time. It consisted of ninety-eight centuries, among whom eighteen were knights provided with horses at the public expense. The money necessary for this purpose, was levied from the widows, who, till that time, were free from taxes. The next four classes were in proportion to their property, and made in all ninety-five centuries. The sixth class was composed of the poor, which, though it was the most numerous, made but one century. Its members were called *proletarii*, because their services consisted in rearing children for the nation; and *capite censi*, because, they only made up the number, paid no taxes, nor were obliged like the rest to go to war.

The people divided into classes, and centuries.

A very important effect was produced by this new division; for, from this time, the votes were taken by the centuries in the public assemblies, and no longer singly; so that, though the last class preserved a right to vote, they in fact had no influence in the public deliberations: and the first, on the contrary, while they continued unanimous, alone determined every thing. This was an advantage which the first class obtained by means of their money, and the men which they provided for the service of the state, each century being obliged to raise a certain sum, and a fixed number of men for the army.

The first class ruled in the public assemblies.

But, was it just to leave the public deliberations entirely in the hands of the rich? The consequences will enable us to judge.

The last class excluded from the army.

The young and the old were distinguished in all the classes but the last. 'That is,' says the celebrated Rousseau of Geneva, 'the populace, of which it was composed, were *not* allowed the honour of bearing arms in the service of their country; and to be entitled to defend it, they must have been possessed of a home; so that of the innumerable crowds of beggars, that shine at present in the armies of kings, there is perhaps scarce one who would not have been driven with disdain from a Roman cohort, at the time that soldiers were the supporters of liberty.'* Here, as well as in other places, our Genevan greatly exaggerates; but there is no question, that a man will be animated with more courage in the defence of his own property, than when fighting for the property or pretensions of another. Xenophon judiciously asks, *If property does not inspire the possessor with courage?*

The census and lustrum.

Servius, foreseeing that the fortunes of men were exposed to a thousand accidents, and that many of the people might thereby very soon be placed in wrong classes, passed a law, which made it necessary to renew the census every fifth year, accompanied with a ceremony, which procured it the name of *Lustrum*; and the *lustra* became a measure of time, by which the Romans reckoned in the same manner as the Greeks did by Olympiads.

* Contr. social. lib. 4.

Hard condition of the slaves mitigated.

The condition of the Roman slaves could not fail to excite the compassion of a good prince; and Servius softened its rigour like a skilful politician. Notwithstanding the barbarism of the times, he was sensible how terrible was that situation which rendered slavery hereditary, and made it impossible for humanity ever to recover its rights; and that reducing slaves to despair, naturally inspired them with hatred against their masters, while it was easy to attach them to the state, by giving them hopes of being one day admitted members. Affected by these reasons, which the senate could with difficulty relish, he not only permitted slaves to be made free, but likewise the freedmen to be incorporated as members of the state. The appellation of freedmen, which was continued to them, could not fail to recal humiliating ideas to their remembrance; but still it was a great happiness to escape from a servile condition, and the more so, as the Romans scarcely treated their slaves better than if they had been beasts of burden. They were admitted only into the four city tribes, which were the least honourable of the whole.

Servius calms the animosity of the Sabines and the Latins.

The highest encomiums are likewise due to Servius for another scheme which he put in execution. Though the Sabines and Latins had been united to the Roman government both by force of arms and treaties, yet their animosity against a people who had risen upon their ruins could not be extinguished. The king, on purpose to confirm the peace, of which he earnestly represented the great advantages, persuaded them to build a temple in honour of Diana at Rome, where they might, every year,

sacrifice in common; that they should meet immediately after the sacrifice to bring all disputes to an amicable conclusion, and to consult upon the best methods of preserving friendship and harmony; after which a great market should be opened, when every one might purchase such commodities as he wanted. Here, religion, friendly conferences, and commercial advantages, united with the state of the times, to make these strangers so many Romans, by which they profited at least as much as Rome. Though the terms of the treaty were in the Latin language, yet they were engraven upon a pillar in Greek characters; and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who alleges that the Romans were of Greek origin, does not fail to adduce this as a proof. But would not such authority serve to prove that the Goths, Franks and Lombards, were descended from Rome, as they all make use of the Roman characters?

Assassination of Servius.

We are told, that while Servius was sacrificing every thing for the good of the public, and proposed to lay down his crown on purpose to establish a republican government, he was taken from his subjects by a most atrocious deed. His daughter Tullia, a monster of cruelty and ambition, had been married to Tarquin, the grandson of the king of the same name, and both husband and wife undertook to dethrone Servius. The conspiracy ended with the murder of the king, whose execrable daughter drove her chariot over his dead body. Of six kings of Rome, all deserving the highest encomiums, we see four dying violent deaths.

TARQUIN THE PROUD.

Year of Rome, 219. Tarquin the Proud. His tyranny.

It was not to be expected but that Tarquin, stained with the blood of the late king, and usurping his throne, without applying either to the senate or people, must reign like a tyrant. The laws were forced to give way to violence and injustice; but, like a skilful tyrant, he neglected no means which could be employed to confirm and extend his power. Oppression could not fail to make him detested by the citizens; he therefore endeavoured to find his security in the army, and gained a part of the soldiers by gentleness and acts of kindness. A numerous guard of foreigners watched for the security of his person, while informations and severe punishments spread universal terror, at a time when the assemblies of the people, suspended by edicts, left no resource against the progress of tyranny.

Reduces the Gabians.

The following celebrated anecdote may serve to give an idea of the policy of Tarquin. A number of the patricians having taken shelter in Gabii, a city of the Latins, they stirred up the inhabitants to rise in rebellion against him. His son Sextus, whose proceedings he directed, upon some feigned quarrel, pretended to betray him, and, for that purpose, retired to Gabii, where he played his part so well, that he obtained the command of their army, and then sent to his father for his instructions. Tarquin, being unwilling to explain himself, either by word of mouth or by writing, conducted the messenger into the garden, where he cut off the

heads of the tallest poppies, and then allowed him to depart without any other answer. Sextus conceived the meaning of the enigma, and, putting to death the principal inhabitants, delivered up the city to his father.

His victories add to his power.

The tyrant added valour to his cruelty, and overcame all his enemies. The senate were without power, and the desponding people bore the yoke without daring to complain; so that Rome seemed to be reduced to that state of languor and oppression where the slavery of nations usually begins.

The books of the Sybils.

A political fraud, for it is scarce possible to form any other idea of it, set superstition to work on purpose to make the people still more tractable. Historians tell us, that an unknown woman presented nine volumes to the king, for which she asked a considerable price; that the king, being unwilling to pay so much, she burnt three, and returning, asked the same sum for the other six; which, being again returned, she burnt three more, and then repeated the same demand. It was now found, that the remaining books were the oracles of the Cumean Sybil, which, being purchased by Tarquin, the woman disappeared. These books were carefully preserved, and, while they were in the possession of the prince, and afterwards of the senate, became the infallible interpreters of the will of the gods. From them, answers were obtained for every occasion, and such oracles as power chose to dictate. With such a machine, there is no difficulty in governing a superstitious people.

The building of the Capitol.

About this time, the scheme of the first Tarquin to build the Capitol was completed, which

gave an opportunity of devising another fable of no less importance. While the people were digging for the foundation of the temple of Jupiter, it is said that they found a human head as fresh as if it had been but newly cut off. The augurs being consulted upon this prodigy, declared, that Rome would become the capital of all Italy, and from thence the Tarpeian rock derived the name of *Capitol*. Similar fictions struck the minds of the people, and, elating their souls, inspired them with a kind of enthusiasm to which the Romans were in some degree indebted for their success. Convinced in their minds, that the gods had destined them to empire, they flew to battle as if to certain victory.

Lucretia violated.

In the mean time, Tarquin reaped the fruits of his policy, and the chimeras with which he amused the people, completed what he had begun with violence. He reigned absolute; and probably would have preserved his usurped authority, if the horrid outrage of his son Sextus against the chaste Lucretia, had not provoked the keenest indignation. Junius, surnamed Brutus, whose father had fallen a victim to the tyrant, and who preserved himself by pretending to be an idiot, seized the present occasion of being avenged, and of breaking the fetters which enslaved his country. He roused the courage of the senators by his eloquence, and at the name of liberty, with the sight of the dead body of Lucretia, who had stabbed herself, the people were wakened from their lethargy. Tarquin was besieging Ardea, the capital of the Rutuli in Latium, and was condemned, with all his posterity, to perpetual banishment. Who-

Royalty proscribed.

ever should attempt to restore him, was devoted to the infernal gods; and monarchical government being totally proscribed, the republican was substituted in its place. This great revolution was not brought about by the tyranny of Tarquin, but by the offence of his son; and the violated Lucretia, rendered *that* power detestable, of which they had seen only the abuse. About the same time, Athens had shaken off the yoke of the Pisistratidæ. There is a very extraordinary resemblance between the causes and circumstances of these two revolutions.

Rome indebted to her kings.

Rome had been governed by seven kings, during a space of two hundred and forty-four years, in which time they laid the foundation of her grandeur, being all able princes, without even excepting the last, who, though he may be reproached with acts of cruelty and injustice, must be allowed to have possessed both genius and talents. Montesquieu says, with regard to him, 'Wo to the reputation of every prince who is oppressed by a ruling party!' It is not improbable, that if the crown had continued in the family of Tarquin, his memory would not only have been less blasted, but celebrated, in the Roman annals. The historians are accused of having exaggerated their accounts of his tyranny.

Doubts on the history of these kings.

It has been asked, how seven elective kings, four of whom were assassinated and one dethroned, could include no less than a space of two hundred and forty-four years in the history of Rome, while hereditary kingdoms afford no such instance of the length of seven reigns. It has also been asked, by what prodigy all these

kings came to display such eminent abilities, which is likewise equally without example; and from thence proofs against the truth of their history are drawn. The difficulty is undoubtedly very great; but I shall neither attempt to advance probabilities nor conjecture. In these early times, dates and some particulars may be untrue; but I have endeavoured to mention things which are really useful.

SECOND EPOCH.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CONSULAR GOVERNMENT. OPPRESSION OF THE PEOPLE BY THE SENATE.

FROM THE YEAR OF ROME TWO HUNDRED AND FORTY-FIVE TO TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTY.

Year of Rome, 245. Two consuls substituted by the senate instead of kings.

THE Romans, assembled by tribes and curiæ, had passed an irrevocable decree against royalty, which may be truly reckoned a deed of the people; for in this kind of public assembly, riches had no influence where the vote of every individual was equal; but when the government of the republic became the object of their attention, the patricians, who were never negligent of what concerned their own interest, preferred the comitia by centuries, where the first class carried every thing against all the rest. Two magistrates were annually chosen from their body, who exercised the royal authority, under the modest appellation of consuls. Brutus, who was author of the conspiracy, and Collatinus the husband of Lucretia, were first elected to the consulship. There was certainly something sacred attendant on the name of king, since it was not entirely abolished, for they instituted a new priesthood to which that title was attached; but the *Rex Sacrorum* did not intermeddle in civil matters.

A sudden transition from tyranny to liberty, is of all things the most likely to inspire the minds of the people with courage, and to produce uncommon actions, even though that liberty be less real than apparent; they are not then to be deterred by ideas of danger or difficulties, and every thing is sacrificed to preserve them in a state which they imagine leaves the power in their own hands. The whole body become enlivened by the ardent zeal of a few, and seem to be solely animated with a love of the public good; of which Rome affords numerous examples sufficiently known. Enthusiasm for liberty.

Tarquin, having been forsaken by his army, fled for refuge to Tarquinii. The Tuscans sent an embassy, on pretence of demanding the restitution of his property; when some young Romans were seduced by these dangerous ambassadors, and formed a conspiracy in favour of the king, either from a persuasion that he was unjustly persecuted, or from a desire of getting into his good graces; but the plot having been discovered by a slave, and the two sons of Brutus found among the guilty, sentence of death was pronounced against them by their father, who caused them to be put to death in his presence. A most dreadful example! but what he thought absolutely necessary to destroy the evil to the root. The property of Tarquin was given up to the people, and the Tuscan ambassadors, who had violated the laws of nations, were dismissed. This instance of moderation does the more honour to the Romans, as it serves to make the enemies of their liberty appear more detestable. Brutus condemns his two sons.

Collatinus fell under suspicion, only because Death of Brutus.

he was less severe against the conspirators than Brutus, and he would have been banished if he had not followed the advice of his colleague, and abdicated the consulship. Brutus was killed in the field, fighting against Aruns, the son of Tarquin. They wounded one another mortally, and liberty was confirmed to the people by the blood of its principal author. A funeral oration was pronounced upon Brutus, and the women of Rome wore mourning for him a whole year.

Conduct of Poplicola in favour of the people.

The spirit of liberty is so prone to be suspicious, that the new consul, Valerius Poplicola, a very popular man, was suspected of aiming at tyranny, because he built a house upon a piece of ground which overlooked the *Forum*. He demolished it, to recover the confidence of the people; caused the axes to be taken from the *fasces* of the lictors; and ordered that they should be lowered before the assemblies of the people. He made it lawful to kill any one who endeavoured to set himself up as king; and gave leave to appeal to the people, even from the sentence of the consuls. To conclude, he trusted the care of the public treasure to two senators, elected by the people. These proceedings occasioned his being four times chosen consul; but the senate, too jealous of power, were naturally dissatisfied. However, the assistance of the people was necessary to oppose the enemy.

Porsenna lays siege to Rome.

Porsenna, the most powerful king of Tuscany, espoused the cause of Tarquin, and suddenly appeared at the gates of Rome. The senate had been provident in laying in the necessary store of provisions, and relieving from taxes

the poor citizens whom discontent might have stirred up to revolt. They declared, that their bringing children to the state was sufficient. In the mean time the city probably would have been obliged to surrender, had it not been for an incredible action of Horatius Cocles, who alone defended the bridge over the Tiber, while the people were employed in breaking it down. From that time the siege was converted into a blockade, and there was great reason to be apprehensive of a famine. If we may credit Livy, for the silence of Dionysius of Halicarnassus upon the subject makes it much to be doubted, Mucius Scævola, an intrepid young man, who believed every thing to be lawful which could be done for the preservation of his country, penetrated not only into the camp, but even into the tent of the Tuscan king, with a design of assassinating him, though at the expense of his own life, but, from a mistake, failed in the attempt; yet he boldly declared to Porsenna, that the same resolution had been entered into by a number of his fellow-citizens. *It is the Roman character*, said he, *to act and suffer like heroes.* Was it heroic to turn murderer? It is strange to see the Roman historians celebrating an action which the laws of all nations join to condemn. Fanaticism alone can render sacred what is shocking to human nature.

Porsenna concludes a peace with the Romans.

Porsenna showed himself more generous, by dismissing the assassin. He then made peace with the Romans. I shall pass over the story of Clelia and her young companions unnoticed, who were given as hostages, and who were said to have swum back across the Tiber under a

shower of arrows. Marvellous stories may amuse children, but can only make men of reflexion distrust ancient traditions. Horatius Cocles, Mucius Scævola, and Clelia, are said to have been loaded with honours and rewards. There is no doubt that Rome formed the minds of her citizens to heroism by honouring valour. By the death of Valerius Poplicola, who died poor, after having been four times elected consul, Rome lost a model of true patriotism. His funeral was celebrated at the public expense; and the ladies of Rome wearing mourning for him a year, as had been done for Brutus, was a remarkable proof of his being regretted by his country.

Death of Poplicola.

In the mean time the intrigues of Tarquin continued, thirty cities of Latium having united in his favour; and even Rome was not without the seeds of rebellion in her own bosom. The patricians, no longer the fathers of the people, sought only to domineer over them as their masters; and every day the inequality of fortune increased, which could not fail to sow the seeds of dissension. None were to be seen but those who were either rich or poor. Though their wealth was but moderate in a small republic, without any advantages derived from commerce, yet their riches were immense when compared with the indigent state of the people, who, in fact, had nothing. These wretched people having no lands, or almost none, unacquainted with industry, and knowing nothing but how to meet death bravely in the field, lived upon what they could borrow, at an usurious interest of twelve per cent. After having accumulated debts upon debts, they found them-

The people oppressed by the patricians.

selves exposed to the severities of merciless creditors, who put them in prison, or reduced them to slavery. Overwhelmed with oppression, the people declared, that they would no longer be enrolled for the wars unless the debts were cancelled, and some of them even threatened to leave the city. 'What good do we derive from a country,' said they, 'that leaves us nothing but an obligation to spill our blood in her service? Shall we not live as well elsewhere, at least we shall be free from creditors?'

Proposal to cancel the debts.

These murmurs having alarmed the senate, they found it was necessary to deliberate on an affair which was become so serious. Valerius, the brother of Poplicola, proposed the abolition of debts as a step which both prudence and humanity required, and the motion was approved by the most moderate and the poorest of the senators; but Appius Claudius, a rich Sabine, who was newly settled in Rome, haughty, severe, and inflexible, maintained that the public faith, which was the foundation upon which society rested, would be ruined by abolishing the debts; that even the people would become sufferers by it, as every one would refuse them money in the day of want; that they might show indulgence to those debtors who had not merited their misfortunes by improper conduct; but that the rest being a disgrace to Rome, they ought not to regret the loss of them if they thought fit to leave the city; besides, by softening matters, they only encouraged sedition, whereas, by making one or two examples, they would quell the mutinous. These specious reasons by no means suited the present situa-

tion of affairs, for the evil was too general; and they must have been ruined by driving the people, who were the real strength of the nation, to despair.

The people refuse to take arms.

In such a crisis the senate ought not to trust to lenitives of doubtful efficacy. They put off the decision till the war should be at an end, and in the mean time suspended all claims of creditors; but the enemy were advancing, and the mutineers became more and more enraged. Except the richest of the plebeians, and those clients who, from particular reasons, were attached to the nobles, the whole refused to take up arms till their demands were granted; upon which a scheme was contrived to deceive the people. To put an end to disputes, it was proposed to create a new magistrate, called a Dictator, who should be invested with absolute authority on those conjunctures where the common laws were insufficient; and lest his power should degenerate into tyranny, he was to continue but six months in office.

Year of Rome, 255. Creation of a Dictator.

The people looking forward, and easily deceived in matters which depend upon futurity, readily approved of the expedient. The power of nominating the dictator was reserved to one of the consuls; but the nomination was to be confirmed by the people. Far from being desirous of such an important charge, the two consuls, Clelius and Lartius, generously contended who should name his colleague, till Lartius submitted, and was chosen dictator. It is one of the most extraordinary phenomena of history, and highly worthy of our admiration, to observe, that the dictatorship, which gave the right of life and death, and the most des-

potic power, frequently proved the preservation of Rome; that it was never abused by the ambition of any one who held the office; and the intention being accomplished, it was often relinquished before the six months were expired. Sylla was the first who usurped it, so great was the influence of the laws upon the minds of the Romans.

Lartius immediately appointed a general of the horse, *magister equitum*, who was to continue in office as long as himself; a custom observed ever after. Then, with a retinue of twenty-four lictors, who carried the *fasces* furnished with axes, he showed that he was resolved to punish rebellion and every offence with severity. As there was no appeal from his sentence, the mutineers trembled, and found the necessity of submitting. The citizens were then numbered, and found to exceed a hundred and fifty thousand above the age of puberty. * The dictator raised troops as he pleased; and the Latins, who were then threatening Rome, proposed a suspension of hostilities; upon which he concluded a truce, and immediately resigned the dictatorship. The dictator Lartius quells the sedition.

As soon as the truce was expired, the Latins again took up arms, and it seemed necessary to elect a second dictator. Posthumius being chosen, marched to oppose the enemy, whose army Battle of Regillus.

* I do not know if the number mentioned by historians is to be credited. The eighth time of taking the numbers, which was in the year of Rome 279, there were only one hundred and three thousand citizens. The ninth, in 288, makes them a hundred and eighty thousand two hundred and fifteen. Wars and diseases might greatly lessen the number in a few years; but how shall we account for their being so greatly increased in so few years?

amounted to forty-three thousand men, while he had twenty-five thousand; but his troops being to engage the sons of Tarquin, they were fired with all the ardour which a hatred of tyranny could inspire. The bloody battle of Regillus, in which Titus and Sextus, the sons of the tyrant, were killed, determined the fate of the republic, scarcely ten thousand of the Latins having escaped from the field. They sued to the Romans for peace, and were irrecoverably subjected.

Death of Tarquin.

Tarquin, worn out with age and misfortunes, died at Cumæ in Campania. The liberty of Rome was the produce of his despotism; and he found that even the most fortunate ambition may lead to destruction; yet, notwithstanding the experience of all ages, these thoughts seldom occur to the ambitious.

The Patricians renew their oppressions.

While the patricians continued in dread lest the people should recal Tarquin, they behaved to them with some degree of caution; but they were no sooner delivered from this apprehension, than they redoubled their former oppressions, and put in execution, more rigorously than ever, that detestable law, which gave them the power of loading insolvent debtors with chains, or even selling them, so that the whole city was soon filled with oppressions and murmurings. An old man, who had escaped out of prison, presented himself an emaciated ghastly spectacle before the people. He exposed to them the scars of the wounds which he had received in fighting for his country, and the marks of recent stripes with which he had been torn by a merciless creditor. He gave an account of his misfortunes, occasioned by accident, and the

avarice of another person. The people kindled into fury, and the senate immediately assembled, when Appius Claudius adhered to his former opinion, and advised the senate to make no concession, but to punish.

This advice was the more indefensible, as the Volsci, having violated a treaty of peace, had just declared war against them, and accounts of their advancing with a numerous army immediately followed. The plebeians did not in the least attempt to dissemble their satisfaction; and openly declared, that the patricians might go and fight their battles themselves, since they only reaped the advantages of victory; but the consul Servilius, by his mild behaviour, his promises, and suspending the claims of the creditors for the present, so satisfied the people, that love of their country reviving with their hopes, the minds of these brave citizens were quieted, and the debtors contended who should be first enrolled. Servilius defeated the Volsci, and divided the plunder among his troops; but his colleague Appius, reproaching him with his desire of popularity, persuaded the senate to refuse him the honour of a triumph. Servilius, provoked at this affront, assembled the people in the Campus Martius, and, complaining of the injustice of the senate, decreed a triumph to himself, and marched, in the most pompous manner, to the Capitol, followed by his army, amidst the universal acclamations of the populace.

The consul Servilius calms the people.

It is surprising that the senate, so highly extolled for their prudence and wisdom, should persist in schemes of severity, as if the dread-

The severity of the senate produces a revolt.

ful condition of many of the plebeians had not required immediate relief, had it been practicable to keep a warlike people, upon whom they depended for their defence, perpetually oppressed. Aristocracy is of all governments the most oppressive. The senators wished to have it established, yet their conduct was such as to make it completely odious. The people in vain solicited the performance of the promises made by Servilius; but the inexorable Appius was deaf to their complaints. They gathered together in crowds, beset the tribunals, insulted the senators, and refused to be enrolled against the Sabines, who, taking advantage of these disturbances, set up the standard of rebellion.

The dictator attempts to soften the senate.

Appius persisted in the senate to maintain that they ought to check the licentiousness of the people by severity; that the appeal from the sentence of the consuls was a source of sedition, and, to remedy it, it was necessary to choose a dictator, whose absolute power should suppress the spirit of rebellion. He had sufficient influence to prevail; and Valerius was chosen dictator, who was happily a man of prudence and moderation. He persuaded the plebeians, by his promises, to join in the common cause; and having reduced the Sabines, insisted upon the extinction of the debts; but the young senators were obstinate in their refusal, and insolently accused him of having betrayed the interest of his own rank in favour of the populace. Fired with indignation, he assembled the people, gave them an account of the ill intentions of the senate, and laid down his office of dictator.

The greater respect and gratitude which the people showed to Valerius, the more violent was their resentment against the whole body of patricians, and sedition was ready to break forth. The consuls, who had each of them their army still on foot, depending upon the influence of the oath, which the religion of the Romans rendered inviolably sacred, ordered the soldiers, on pretence of a new war, to follow them. All the soldiers at the time of being enrolled, took an oath that they would obey their generals, and till the time of their being dismissed, it kept them subject to military services. It was then necessary for them to leave Rome, and the most violent of them thought of killing the consuls, as a means of absolving them from their oath, for the passions will go every length in hoodwinking the conscience; but it was represented to them, that a sacred engagement could not be dissolved by the commission of a crime. However, they contrived to elude the law by another frivolous evasion, which was to steal away the colours, and retire with them; for the soldiers had likewise sworn not to abandon their colours. By betraying the consuls to follow them, they thought they faithfully adhered to the oath, and, appointing officers for themselves, they went and encamped upon the Sacred Mount, beyond the Anio, about three miles distant from Rome.

The soldiers evade the military oath.

This unexpected desertion made the senate sensible of the injury they did themselves by their unjust severity. The people ran in crowds to the Sacred Mount, and the guards who were placed at the gates could not oppose them.

Desertion of the people.

The deputies, who were sent out to treat with the mutineers, brought back for answer, that, after promises had been so frequently violated, it was impossible to depend upon the senate; that, since the patricians wanted to domineer in Rome, they might continue masters of the city; but that the poor citizens would be free, and should esteem that place to be their country where they could enjoy liberty. * What was most surprising, was to see the order and discipline which prevailed in their camp. There was no tumult nor act of violence; they came down from the mountain in search of provisions, and, contenting themselves with what was barely necessary, returned quietly to their posts. Never was an army seen under the consuls more worthy of the name; nor was there ever an insurrection, where the people, with arms in their hands, and driven to despair, signalized themselves by such astonishing moderation.

Deputation of the senate to the people.

Even this moderation was distressing to the senate; for it showed that their schemes were well concerted, and that they had a formidable power ready to fall upon the city, so that an universal consternation took place. No one durst venture to canvass for the consulship, and two senators were compelled to accept it. They took the affair of the debts into consideration, and appointed ten deputies to confer with the the people, allowing them full power to agree to any terms that were judged advantageous for the republic. Appius and the young senators in vain attempted to over-rule this mea-

* Ubi libertas, ibi patria.

sure; their violent counsels had already produced too fatal consequences again to extinguish the sentiments of humanity. Things were come to such a pass, that unless great concessions were made to the people, it was impossible to restore peace and good order. Thus we see the abuse of power bring about the most important revolutions.

THIRD EPOCH.

CREATION OF THE TRIBUNES OF THE PEOPLE. INCREASE OF POPULAR INFLUENCE.

FROM THE YEAR OF ROME TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTY TO THREE HUNDRED AND TWO.

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE CREATION OF TRIBUNES OF THE PEOPLE TO THE BANISHMENT OF CORIOLANUS.

The deputies of the senate well received by the people.

THREE men deserving the confidence of the people, were sent at the head of the deputation from the senate; Lartius and Valerius, who had both held the office of dictator, and Menenius Agrippa, who was of consular dignity, and author of the prudent measures now *adopted*. Notwithstanding their disgust, the people sincerely loved their country, and received the deputies with every expression of joy and satisfaction. They would have been very tractable, if it had not been for two of the ringleaders, whose fiery tempers kept up the dissention.

Fable of Menenius.

Upon this occasion, Menenius is said to have made use of the fable of the belly and the members with success. The members rebelled against the belly, which they accused of profiting by their labour, without doing any thing in return for them, but were undeceived by

woful experience; they refused their service, and sunk into a mortal languor. This he alleged to be a picture of the people who were too much prejudiced against the senate. Reflecting minds might see the justice of the apologue, but other motives were necessary to affect the multitude; and certainly Menenius made a deeper impression upon them, by declaring that the debts would be cancelled by the senate.

Junius Brutus persuades the people to require plebeian magistrates.

This was all the people wanted; but one of their leaders, whose name was Junius, and who assumed that of Brutus, as being a restorer of liberty, took the opportunity of railing against the senate, for the deceitfulness with which they had hitherto treated the people. He advised them to take every possible precaution for the future, and to insist upon having plebeian magistrates, whose sole duty should be to watch over their interests; a demand which at bottom was just, since, from what had already happened, they had reason to dread the most cruel injustice. The deputies were perplexed with this proposal; and, thinking it was their duty to inform the senate, set out on their return to Rome, after having given the people hopes of having their request granted.

Tribunes of the people created.

The senate had reduced themselves to the wretched alternative, either of encountering all the horrors of a civil war, or of yielding to whatever the people chose to demand. It was in vain for Appius to oppose their demands, and with the most earnest zeal, call upon gods and men to witness the numberless ills which he foreboded. Prudent dispositions might have prevented matters from coming to this extremity; but his haughty severity having excluded

every other means of reconciliation, the senate agreed to the election of tribunes of the people; which was the name given to those new magistrates, who were chosen from that body for their protection. A law was passed to render their persons sacred; declaring whoever presumed to strike a tribune *accursed*, and devoting his property to the service of the goddess Ceres. If any of them was killed, the murderer might be put to death without trial.

Power of the tribunes.

The tribunes of the people wore no ensigns of dignity. They were seated at the gate of the senate-house, which they could not enter until they had an order from the consuls. Their power scarcely extended beyond the walls of Rome, and they were forbidden to absent themselves from the city; but if any one of the tribunes disapproved of a decree of the senate, it was sufficient to invalidate it, and his single *veto* put a stop to all their proceedings. We shall see their power daily increase, and become as formidable as that of the Ephori in Sparta. If they frequently abused their power, as might be foreseen, they at least preserved the people from oppression. At first they were only five, and increased afterwards to ten, and the election was annual. Upon the introduction of tribunes,

Ediles.

there were two plebeian magistrates called *Ediles*, appointed as their officers, whose duty it was to attend to the execution of the laws respecting buildings.

The taking of Corioli.

The establishment of tribunes, and the extinction of debts, having brought back the people to their duty, Posthumus Cominius, the consul, defeated the Volsci, and took Corioli their capital. His success upon this occasion

was chiefly owing to the valour of Marcius, a young patrician, who had all the qualities of a hero, but without the moderation of a sage. The consul having crowned him with his own hand, wanted in the next place to enrich him, and therefore destined a tenth part of the plunder to his use; but it was refused by Marcius, who thought the surname of Coriolanus, which was given to him by the soldiers, with whom he was in the highest favour, a nobler recompense.

Funeral of Menenius Agrippa.

Notwithstanding the examples of avarice, which had been given by many of the patricians, the heroes of the republic were for a long time distinguished by their contempt of riches. That noble virtue, which at the time that it placed Aristides above all the great men of Athens, was so valued by Menenius Agrippa, that when he died, he did not leave wherewith to defray his funeral expenses. The people imposed a tax upon themselves, that he might be buried in the most magnificent manner, and refused to receive back their money, though the senate had given orders to the questors to pay the expense. The money was therefore given to his children.

An insurrection occasioned by a famine.

To this generous contest between the two orders, succeeded a new commotion, occasioned by a famine, in consequence of the people having left their lands unsown when they retreated to the Sacred Mount. All the care that the senate took to provide against the scarcity, did not prevent the people from suffering and uttering complaints. In such circumstances they are commonly unjust, because they do not reflect upon the cause of their misfortune, but

are prevoked by their feelings, to judge unfavourably of those to whom they fruitlessly look for relief; and they suspected that the senators kept the corn for their own families. The tribunes being provoked at two colonies being planted against their inclination, propagated this report, and inflamed the minds of the people; while Appius railed against them *in the* senate, and inspired the senators with a resolution to check this spirit, and to punish the offenders. The consuls assembled the people with that intention, and being interrupted by the tribunes, attempted to silence them, when a dispute arose about the privilege of speaking at the public assemblies, which afforded the tribunes an opportunity of extending their authority.

The consuls prevent the tribunes from haranguing the people.

Junius Brutus, one of the ediles, the same individual whose audacity was formerly mentioned, having obtained leave to speak, as *if to* finish the contest, asked them the reason of their preventing the tribunes from addressing the people. 'It is,' replied one of the consuls, 'because the people were assembled by us, and therefore the right of speaking belongs to us; but if the tribunes had summoned the people, so far from interrupting them, I would not even have come to hear them.' This imprudent expression produced most important consequences. 'Plebeians, you have conquered,' cried Junius; 'Tribunes, allow the consuls to harangue the people at present, and to-morrow I will show you the power and dignity of your office.' In fact, the tribunes, by his advice, next morning at day-break appeared in the forum, attended by almost the whole people,

when one of them, whose name was Icilius, declared that it was essential for the faithful discharging of their office, that they should have the power of assembling the people, and haranguing them upon the subject of the general interest without being interrupted. The motion was applauded, and a law which had been prepared by him and his colleagues over night, was immediately approved.

Decree of the people.

This law declared, 'That in the assemblies of the people summoned by the tribunes, nobody shall presume to interrupt or contradict them; that if any one dare to do it, he must find security for the payment of such fine as shall be imposed; and if he refuses to give security, he shall be put to death.' The power of the tribunes was greatly increased by this means; yet without this privilege they could have protected the people but very feebly. The abuses of aristocracy brought about changes which could only produce fresh grievances; and this law was a dreadful blow to the senate, who refused to confirm it, on pretence of its being the work of an unlawful assembly; upon which the people declared, that if they refused the laws passed by the plebeians, they would reject the decrees of the senate, so that the senators yielded either from complaisance or necessity.

The tribunes anxious to extend the rights of the people.

The more the tribunes gained ground, the farther were the rights of the people extended, in which undoubtedly they were personally interested. If they were led by motives of ambition, or laboured to serve their own ends, they were at the same time striving to confine the power of the senate within the limits of a mixed government, where aristocracy tempered by

democracy, could not oppress the people. An opportunity very soon offered for their making a new trial of their strength, and the success kept pace with their wishes.

Coriolanus gives bad advice against the people.

Corn had been received from Sicily, which country was a valuable resource in days of scarcity. The lower people always suffered; but, content with the little which their lands afforded, committed no outrage, till the haughty severity of Coriolanus kindled the flame. When it came to be debated in the senate, what was to be done with the corn which had been procured from Sicily, it was proposed by some of the senators to distribute it among the poor *gratis*, and humanity dictated the advice; but there were others who advised its being sold at a very high price, to punish and quell the insolence of the people. Coriolanus maintained that they ought to profit by the present situation of affairs, abolish the tribuneship, and break the conventions into which they had entered, upon the Sacred Mount. This hero, whose probity and disinterestedness were so highly extolled, was ignorant of the gentler virtues by which the hearts of men are to be gained. He imagined that all should bend submissively to the authority of the senate; but he weakened its power, and ruined himself by his imprudence. It could not be difficult to foresee, that violence must produce, as violent an opposition.

Coriolanus treats the tribunes and the people with contempt.

The tribunes acquainted with these proceedings, invoked the gods who were avengers of perjury, and the enraged people wanted to murder Coriolanus. These magistrates restrained the popular fury, and summoned Coriolanus to

appear before them; but the haughty patrician despised their summons. They attempted to seize his person, but were repulsed by the young senators, and at last called an assembly of the people, where Coriolanus, far from making an apology to soothe their resentment, in a haughty tone repeated whatever he had said to the senate, protesting that he acknowledged no authority but that of the consuls, and appeared in that assembly of mutineers, only to reproach them for their insolence. He vowed an irreconcilable hatred against the tribunes, whom he called *the poison of the public peace.*

Cited to wait the judgment of the people.

Sicinius, one of the tribunes, immediately condemned him to be put to death by his single authority, and ordered that he should be thrown from the Tarpeian rock. As the patricians were preparing to defend him, and respect for the consuls prevented the people from moving, he then cited Coriolanus to await the judgment of the people in twenty-seven days. It was a custom not to decide any public matter till after three market-days, that the people in the country might be properly informed, and the markets were held only every ninth day. Sicinius added to the summons, that if the senate did not settle the distribution of the corn, the tribunes would take it into their own management.

Trial of Coriolanus.

The senate had never been exposed to such a dangerous attack, and fruitlessly endeavoured to ward off the blow. They set the price of the corn at the same rate as before the disturbances; but that neither prevailed on Sicinius to desist from the accusation, nor to give up to the senators the first examination of the affair,

as was the custom in the time of the kings. The other tribunes, less violent, or of superior abilities, afraid of making themselves detested by an inflexible obstinacy, at last consented to let the senate judge in the first instance, provided that, in the end, it should be referred to the people. The senate deliberated upon the subject, and disputed very warmly, when Appius, according to custom, declared, that unless sedition was checked, all would go to ruin. Valerius, in opposition to him, represented the danger and misery that attended a civil war; and alleged that, by giving the people a proof of condescension, it would make them more inclined to favour the person accused, in which opinion he was joined by the majority. Coriolanus then asked the tribunes, what crime they had to lay to his charge. *The having aspired to sovereignty*, replied they. *If to refute such an accusation, is all that is wanted*, answered the hero boldly, *I will appear before the people.*

The tribunes carried, that the assembly shall vote by tribes.

The tribunes being resolved to have their revenge, planted their batteries with the greatest dexterity possible. They foresaw, that if the suffrages were to be taken by centuries, according to the system established by Servius, the senate would carry their point. They therefore required that they should be assembled by tribes, upon pretence that every citizen had an equal right to vote in an affair in which the rights of the people were concerned. The senate were obliged to yield up this essential point; and from that time the form of government was changed in favour of the plebeians. Such is the instability of an imperfect and tempestuous constitution.

The tribes being assembled on the day appointed for trial, Minucius the consul harangued the people in favour of the illustrious citizen who presented himself at their tribunal; insisted upon his birth, his noble actions, and his services to the state, and, in the name of the whole senate, requested that he might not be treated as a criminal. The tribune Sicinius, on the other hand, was equally zealous in the prosecution, and maintained, that the attempts made by Coriolanus to abolish the office of tribune, and to prevent the price of corn from being lowered, were certain proofs of his aiming at tyranny. This imputation was invalidated by Coriolanus, who showed them his scars, and named to them the citizens whose lives he had saved in battle; but Decius, another tribune, accused him of having distributed some plunder among his soldiers, which the laws did not give him a right to dispose of, though there had been frequent examples of it. Coriolanus could make but a weak defence against this unexpected charge, and was condemned to perpetual exile. Of twenty-nine tribes, only nine declared in his favour.

Year of Rome, 262. Coriolanus banished.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE BANISHMENT OF CORIOLANUS TO THE APPOINTMENT OF DECEMVIRS.

After the banishment of Coriolanus, the people exulted as if they had gained a decisive victory over the patricians, while they ought rather to have reproached themselves with shame-

Year of Rome, 262. Coriolanus joins the Volscians.

ful ingratitude to a most respectable citizen to whom they were indebted for very important services, and whose offence, if we confine ourselves to the terms of the accusation, was only imaginary, and unsupported by proofs. They were very soon made sensible of what consequence it is to avoid giving offence to men, who, by their characters, are equally capable of serving or injuring the state. Coriolanus was deaf to every thing but revenge; and, having retired among the Volscians to Antium, persuaded them to take up arms against his country; and, being appointed their general, invaded the Roman territories, spreading universal terror wherever he advanced.

The Romans send deputies to him.

The people and senate then changed their conduct with respect to Coriolanus. The former, always influenced by present occurrences, insisted upon his being recalled; while the senate, looking upon him as an enemy of the republic, refused their consent; but the senators were soon softened by the prospect of danger, and sent a deputation to the implacable Coriolanus, who received them with every mark of disdain. The priests made the next attempt to soften him, but met with the same reception. At last his mother, the illustrious Veturia, at the head of the Roman ladies, went to disarm her rebellious son, when the feelings of nature overcame his haughty spirit. He cried out, *Rome is saved, but your son is lost!* He then concluded a peace,* and, according to some

* To preserve the remembrance of the service done to the state by Veturia, the senate erected a temple to the *Fortune of Women*, into which only the ladies were entitled to enter.

writers, was assassinated by the Volscians; His death. while others affirm that he continued to languish till he was of a great age, deeply regretting his absence from his native country.

His cotemporary Themistocles experienced a similar fate, after having saved Athens by his courage and prudence. In comparing these two celebrated men, it is easy to observe the great superiority of Greece, which had at that time baffled the power of Asia, over a growing republic, whose only enemies were a few petty nations of Italy that were situated in the neighbourhood of Rome; but, remaining always armed against their neighbours, the Romans were taught, by these trifling contests, at length to subdue the most powerful nations. The Greeks at that time superior to the Romans.

In the mean time, an Agrarian law, which was proposed by Cassius the consul, revived the dissensions. It is said that ambition had inspired him with the desire of promoting this law, as an instrument by which he thought to obtain sovereign power. He proposed, that not only the Romans, but likewise their allies, should have a share of the conquered lands, and even of those which had been a long time usurped by the patricians. The people thought they had an exclusive right, and were offended at the thought of the allies being admitted. The senate determined that no foreigners should share, but in proportion as they had contributed to the conquest, and passed a decree by which ten senators were intrusted with the execution of the law; thinking by this means to gain time to frustrate the views of Cassius, who was no sooner out of office, than he was accused before the people by two quæstors of Year of Rome, 267. The Agrarian law of Cassius.

aiming at sovereignty. According to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, he was convicted and put to death; and some writers say that his father was the prosecutor before the senate, and caused the sentence to be put in execution in his own house. But it is certain that the senate frequently accused those people of aiming at tyranny whom they thought it their interest to destroy.

The people dissatisfied.

As the passing this decree was only an artifice to deceive the people, the execution of the law was required in vain, and every thing foreboded an approaching rupture. It was at this time that the senate employed all their dexterity to provoke new wars, that the restless ardour of the plebeians might be diverted from attending to domestic cares. The people refused to enlist, but were compelled, by the senate threatening to appoint a dictator; and the Æqui, the Volscians, the Veians, and Tuscans, were all defeated in different engagements. It is said that, in one of those wars, the family of the Fabii alone, consisting of three hundred and six, for a long time continued to terrify the enemy; but were at last surprised and oppressed by numbers, when there was not a single man of the whole family escaped; but, nevertheless, the race was not thereby extinguished.

Discord continues.

The losses sustained by the Romans, constantly repaired by success, were trifling when compared with the evils which sprung from discord. They had scarcely laid down their arms when their dissensions were revived, especially on the subject of the Agrarian law, and on the choice of magistrates. The plebeians, desirous to have a consul of their own nomination, ap-

pointed one, while the other was chosen by the senate. The sudden death of one of the tribunes having struck his colleagues with consternation, as if the gods had disapproved their schemes, the senate became more bold, and treated the people with greater severity. The consuls caused those who refused to enlist to be beaten with rods; and Volero, an old plebeian officer, made his appeal to the people from the cruelty of such a sentence. They instantly flew to his assistance, drove away the lictors, and broke the fasces. Some time after, Volero was chosen one of the tribunes.

Severity of the senate.

Without showing the least personal resentment, this magistrate gave a mortal stab to the power of the patricians, who had great influence in the election of tribunes, which was made by the curiæ. The assemblies by curiæ, like those by centuries, could not meet without a decree of the senate. The auspices were always taken; and as the augurs were all patricians, they had the power in their own hands of directing or dissolving those assemblies which were subjected to a political superstition. On the other hand, the assemblies by tribes were held without consulting the augurs, or waiting the consent of the senate. All the inhabitants of the country, less connected with the patricians than the citizens, had a right of voting in the assemblies of the tribes, though they had not in those of the curiæ; in a word, numbers carried every thing. Volero, therefore, undertook to have the tribunes and ediles elected at the assemblies by tribes, and, in general, every business decided which was of consequence to the public.

Year of Rome, 281. Volero curtails the power of the patricians.

His law met with the most strenuous opposi-

His law at length passed.

tion from the consul Appius Claudius, the son of him whom we have seen so zealous to support the prerogatives of the senate, but still less capable even than his father of yielding on critical occasions. At the meeting of the assembly, he railed with so much spleen and haughtiness, that he disgusted the plebeians at the very time that his colleague Quintus had gained their favour. They came to blows; and if it had been a custom to wear arms in the city, it would probably have proved a bloody quarrel; but the moderation of the senate prevented farther mischief. They not only declared that both parties, being heated with too great zeal, ought to forget the violences committed by each other, but likewise gave their consent to the law proposed by Volero.

The forces of Appius allow themselves to be defeated.

All these changes were brought about by the former tyranny of the senators, while an equitable and temperate behaviour would doubtless have prevented them. Appius was of too fiery a disposition to learn from experience, and gave vent to his severe humour upon the army which he commanded against the Volscians. Tyrannizing over his soldiers, he created to himself as many enemies as he had troops; and the Romans, to be revenged of their general, betrayed the cause of the public, and allowed themselves to be defeated. Dreadful executions commemorated his rage; for the centurions were beaten with rods and beheaded, and the rest of the army decimated. At the same time, the other consul Quintius, who was adored by his soldiers, gained a victory in another part of the country. The good or ill-will of an army often occasions the most important events.

At the expiration of this consulship, the tribunes resumed the affair of the Agrarian law, which proved an inexhaustible subject of disputes. The new consuls proposed to satisfy the people; but all their reasons were defeated by the violence of Appius. The tribunes, provoked by a new refusal, accused him in the presence of the people; but Appius appeared upon the occasion more like a judge than a person accused, and struck them with such awe that they durst not pronounce any sentence against him. However, foreseeing that a second meeting would condemn him, he laid violent hands upon himself. Notwithstanding the opposition of the tribunes, his funeral oration was pronounced by his son, and applauded even by the populace, who could not help admiring the steady courage of the father. Such men, by governing their passions, might prove an honour and glory to their country; but they preserve the flame of discord, by a violent and overbearing attachment to the dignity of their own order, which often rendered their best qualities dangerous.

Appius accused by the tribunes.

The patricians and the rich plebeians were unwilling to be deprived of the lands which they possessed, and the Agrarian law was supported by the tribunes; so that this opposition of interests could not fail to perpetuate the civil distractions, which were carried to such a length, that the people refused to attend the assemblies by centuries, and the consuls were elected by the patricians and their adherents. Amidst all these dissensions, Rome still had some invincible attractions which preserved the love of the people; they declined to go and

Continuation of the dissensions.

establish colonies, and, as Livy says, they [illegible] *rather to claim lands at Rome, than to accept them elsewhere.* This love of country paved the way for those enterprises, which, in an after period, procured them the empire of the world.

Rome wanted laws.

Far from being able at this time to lay down extensive plans of future greatness, they were even unprovided of civil laws for regulating their conduct, or preserving the property of the people. The consuls decided in all differences, either from principles of natural equity, or from ancient customs, or by some laws of Romulus and his successors, of which there were scarce any vestiges remaining in the sacred books, to which the people were strangers. This arbitrary jurisprudence was a mysterious secret, which the patricians kept among themselves. From it they derived a part of their authority; and the people had the misfortune not to know by what rule they were to be governed, or their fate determined.

Year of Rome, 291. Terentian law.

The tribune Terentius, or Terentillus, undertook to remedy this defect. A number of the patricians had been carried off by the plague, and the two consuls were absent upon expeditions. The present moment, therefore, seemed favourable to carry his design into execution. He proposed that a body of laws should be published to serve for the administration of justice. But he did not stop there: for, after having harangued against the despotic power of the consuls, whom he represented as two absolute monarchs, he required that five commissioners should be chosen to determine the proper limits of their power. This was the intention of the famous Terentian law, which was

equally disagreeable to the senators as the Agrarian. Both parties disputed with that zeal which is common in similar circumstances; but the uniform detail of these keen debates cannot be admitted into the plan of our history. Particular interest frequently prevails over the general good, both with one party and the other, and the tribunes were not the most temperate. Quintius Ceso, son of the great Cincinnatus, whom we shall soon have occasion to mention, who might be compared to Coriolanus, because he opposed their scheme, was the first who fell a sacrifice to their anger. Being falsely accused, he quitted Rome without waiting their sentence. Ten citizens having bound themselves in a considerable sum for his appearance, the money was paid by his father, who was then obliged to sell all his possessions, except one small farm, that served him for a retreat.

Ceso accused by the tribunes.

Herdonius, a rich Sabine, taking advantage of these disputes, seized the Capitol by surprise. The consuls ordered the people to arm against the enemy; but they were dissuaded from it by the tribunes, who assured them that it was an artifice of the senate. At last the consul Valerius, by entreaties and promises, prevailed with the people, who, having attacked the enemy, soon recovered the Capitol; but Valerius being killed in the assault, Quinctius Cincinnatus was brought from the plough to succeed him. By a happy mixture of mildness, with steady courage, he restored tranquillity and good order in the state. He gave fresh life to the course of justice, and, in some degree, made the tribunes to be forgotten. Minucius, who succeeded him in the consulship, suffered himself to be sur-

The Capitol taken by a Sabine and recovered.

Cincinnatus consul and then dictator.

rounded by the Æqui, against whom he was engaged in war; and, upon intelligence arriving at Rome, the danger to which the army was exposed, made them choose a dictator, when the choice fell upon Cincinnatus. That illustrious husbandman once more forsook his fields, and put himself at the head of his fellow-citizens, delivered Minucius; made the enemy pass under the yoke; returned in triumph; saw his son Ceso vindicated and recalled; and on the sixteenth day laid down the dictatorship, to go and resume his plough, of which he seemed to be more enamoured than of the honour of a triumph.

Love of poverty and military discipline.

Have these people who undervalue such excellent examples, by saying, that the Romans were at that time ignorant of the seducing power of riches, sufficiently reflected upon the many instances of avarice which were so common among the patricians from the very beginning of the republic? The love of poverty is a quality which belongs only to superior minds. If that virtue was uncommon, poverty at least kept enervating vices at a distance, and military discipline, added to courage and bodily strength, could not fail to render the Romans invincible. When Cincinnatus saved Minucius, he made him resign the consulship, because he had allowed himself to be surprised by the enemy. *You must learn the art of war as an inferior*, said he, *before you take the command of the Roman legions as consul.* Because the army of Minucius was upon the point of being defeated, they were refused a share of the plunder. Such strict discipline and elevated sentiments must either have destroyed a republic which was al-

most continually engaged in war, or enabled the Romans to subdue all other nations.

But they could not agree among themselves: for the tribunes, always persisting in their schemes, prevented the people from enlisting until they could obtain satisfaction, which made the senate have recourse to Cincinnatus, who again quitted his farm to assist them with his advice. As the lands of the republic were laid waste, and no one had taken up arms for their defence, he was of opinion, that the patricians only with their clients should march to oppose the enemy; upon which the people, being ashamed at seeing such an example, became more tractable. The tribunes consented to the levies, upon condition that five should be added to their number. Cincinnatus, like a skilful politician, concluded, that, in proportion as they became more numerous, they would be less united, and the senate yielding to his opinion, the number of tribunes was increased to ten. By gaining one, the attempts of the rest could be prevented. The new tribunes swore that they would support the opinion of the majority; but such harmony could not long subsist.

The tribunes prevent the people from enlisting.

After new disputes, in which violence and animosity took place of zeal and justice, the senate, dreading the total ruin of the republic, were at last obliged to give their consent to the Terentian law. It was resolved, that ten commissioners should be appointed to digest a body of laws; that for one year they should be invested with sovereign power; during which time, all other magistracies, even the tribuneship, whose authority used to continue in the time of the dictators, should cease; and that

Creation of decemvirs.

in them alone the power of making peace or war should be vested. The tribunes could not get any plebeians admitted into the new body of magistrates. Appius Claudius, who was at that time consul, and son of the second Appius, who had killed himself, was the first person appointed; and his colleague, with some others of consular dignity, and three senators, who had been deputed to collect the Grecian laws at Athens, were associated with him.

FOURTH EPOCH.

THE DECEMVIRS AND THE TWELVE TABLES. PERPETUAL VARIATION IN THE REPUBLIC.

FROM THE YEAR OF ROME THREE HUNDRED AND TWO TO THREE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-THREE.

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE CREATION OF DECEMVIRS TO THE INTRODUCTION OF CENSORS.

Year of Rome, 302. The decemvirs begin with moderation.

WHETHER it proceeded from patriotic sentiments, worthy of the great importance of their commission, or that they wanted to secure their authority by a respectable beginning, the decemvirs governed at first like true fathers of their country. Only one of them was attended by the lictors, and had the other ensigns of consular dignity, while the others were not distinguished from the rest of the people but by their being preceded by a single officer. Each of them presided alternately for one day, and, appearing at their tribunal early in the morning, continued to decide disputes with equal justice and humanity. Even Appius, who had been formerly detested, became the delight of the people; and after such violent storms, Rome enjoyed a happy tranquillity, to which she had

been a stranger ever since the days of monarchy.

Laws of the twelve tables approved by the people.

Legislation being the principal object of the new government, the decemvirs applied with great zeal to complete their code. A Grecian exile from Ephesus was employed to explain the laws which were brought from Athens, and a part of the ancient royal ordinances was added to the new compilation. The work being completed, it was exposed to the view of the public upon ten tables of oak, and the people were invited to examine them, and to choose, in fact, to be their own lawgivers. The senate passed a decree to approve of the laws. The people, who give themselves but little trouble to examine what they are anxious to obtain, were delighted with the pretended moderation of the decemvirs, and confirmed the Ten Tables in the assembly by centuries. Two other Tables, which were offered the next year, notwithstanding a disagreeable article, which prohibited the patricians from forming alliances with the plebeian families, were likewise approved.

Encomium by Cicero.

These different laws always continued to be the ground of the common and civil law of the Romans, upon which Cicero has written a splendid encomium. He does not hesitate to allege, that all the principles upon which the happiness of society depends are to be found in the Twelve Tables; that they are superior to all the libraries of philosophers, both from the weight of their authority and their consequent advantages. 'For,' says he, 'we learn from the science of civil law, that virtue and honesty ought to be preferred to all other considerations. On one hand, it shows true merit

honoured with rewards, glory, and dignities; on the other, vice and injustice punished by fines, ignominy, imprisonment, scourgings, exile, and death. They do not communicate these instructions by long fruitless disputes, but with a tone of authority which teaches us to govern our passions, to bridle our desires, to preserve our own property, without allowing either the eyes or hands of avarice to glance at, or to seize that of our neighbours.' * Such ought to be the effects of legislation; but this picture, in some respects, is more striking than true.

The laws of the Twelve Tables, of which only a few fragments remain, were clear and accurate, and, in that respect, superior to those of Solon, though much less agreeable to humanity. In several articles they breathed that tyrannical disposition which the decemvirs did not long continue to dissemble. Fathers preserved absolute power over their children, and masters over their slaves. Debtors were given up to the insults of creditors. After the third market-day, creditors might cut the body of an insolvent debtor in pieces, and divide it among them. † Capital punishments against poets and authors of libels; and several other cruel regulations, which they were soon obliged to mitigate, sufficiently displayed the temper of the legislators.

Some of these laws were cruel.

They might not only kill the robber who came to steal by night, but likewise the robber by day, if, when pursued, he attempted to de-

Laws concerning robbers.

* L. I. de Orat. 193.

† This is the common opinion, but is it possible to believe that such a wicked law ever existed?

fend himself; but the law made it necessary that the pursuer should previously raise the hue and cry. 'This is a thing,' says Montesquieu, 'that the laws which allow men to do themselves justice ought always to require. It is the cry of innocence, which, in the moment of action, calls upon witnesses, and *summons* judges.' The thief taken with the stolen goods in his possession, was to be scourged; and if arrived at the age of manhood, to be delivered up to slavery; and he who had already concealed what he had stolen, to pay double its value. Why this difference?

Upon last wills and successions.

That property might not pass into another family, the relations, on the side of the mother, were not allowed to succeed, but every one might make his will, and choose any citizen he pleased for his heir, even to the prejudice of his own children. The father having a right to sell his children, might, with more reason, have a power to disinherit them. Is not this a sufficient proof, that the Roman laws, which have been so highly extolled, were subject to enormous abuses? However, Rome made a great acquisition when she got a body of laws to serve as a fixed rule for the people, and probably they thought that this advantage greatly outweighed some inconveniencies which they derived from tyrannical regulations.

Processes instantly decided.

Two of these laws, by shortening suits, could not fail to produce excellent effects. They ordained, that if the parties did not agree, the judge should take cognizance of the cause from sun-rise till mid-day, and pass sentence before sun-set. As affairs became more numerous and intricate, they were obliged afterwards to allow

more time. But the Romans knew nothing of the windings and delays of modern chicanery, which frequently makes iniquity triumph over justice, equally ruining both parties, and rendering suits at law one of the greatest scourges of society.

The decemvirs become tyrants.

It would have been a glorious epoch for the Roman republic, if the decemvirs had only produced the Twelve Tables, but they soon degenerated into tyrants. By fawning and hypocrisy, Appius succeeded so as to get himself nominated a second time to that office, which was settled only for one year, and to have such colleagues appointed as were agreeable to him. He and his colleagues very soon laid aside the mask, and proved to be ten tyrants, united by mutual engagements, each of them escorted by twelve lictors, so that the people and the laws were trodden under foot, and such dreadful acts of despotism exercised, that some of the principal men of the republic were obliged to fly from the city. At the end of the year the decemvirs kept possession of their office, without asking the consent of either senate or people, as if the twelve tables had established the right of the strongest.

Assassination of Dentatus.

Such a people as the Romans, jealous of liberty, and accustomed to look upon death with indifference, could not long submit to violent oppression; and two enormous crimes committed by the decemvirs, hurried on their destruction. They had raised troops against the Æqui and Volscians, who, taking the advantage of the weak state in which Rome was at that time, came to lay waste the Roman territories, and the discontented legions suffered themselves to

be defeated. Sicinius Dentatus,* one of the bravest officers, a zealous plebeian, who was equally free in his discourse and intrepid in action, was treacherously assassinated by order of the tyrants; but the wicked attempt of Appius against Virginia, rendered them still more execrable.

Outrage of Appius against Virginia.

Appius remained in Rome, while his colleagues were carrying on the war, and fell in love with Virginia, the daughter of Virginius, a valiant plebeian, who had promised her in marriage to Icilius, formerly a tribune of the people. After several fruitless attempts to gratify his passion, being resolved to dishonour her, he attempted, in quality of a judge, to seize her person, upon pretence that she was the daughter of a slave of one of his clients, who claimed her as his property. Icilius defended Virginia with all the zeal of a lover, and the people rising in an uproar, drove Appius from the tribunal; but his power must have soon prevailed, if Virginius, who had been acquainted with the danger of his daughter, had not quitted the camp to fly to her assistance. He arrived, pleaded her cause, and saw the formidable judge about to pronounce sentence against her, when, transported with rage, to save her honour, he plunged his knife into her bosom, and, showing the bloody weapon to Appius, *It is by this blood,* said he, *that I devote thy head to the infernal gods!* Appius in vain ordered him to be seized, for he made his way among the people, whom he inflamed with hatred against the tyrants, and went to inspire the soldiers with a love of liberty and thirst of revenge.

* Livy calls him L. Siccius.

When men impatiently suffer oppression, tragical scenes never fail of their effect. Except a few servile souls, the whole people abandoned the decemvirs, and adopted republican sentiments. The two armies joined upon the Sacred Mount, and were followed in crowds by the people; but the senate did not know what part to act, till at length the general outcry compelled the decemvirs to resign, and Valerius and Horatius, their enemies, were deputed with full powers to conclude a peace with the people. The tribuneship, and the right of appeal, which were looked upon as the foundations of liberty, were restored, and the decemvirate abolished, but without any violence being allowed to be offered to the persons of the decemvirs. Valerius and Horatius were chosen consuls, and by some popular laws which they made, the attachment of the citizens was greatly increased. The creation of any office, which debarred the people from the privilege of an appeal, was totally prohibited. They ordered, that laws which were passed in the assemblies by tribes, should be equally binding upon the whole body of citizens, as those which were made in the assemblies by centuries. This law, which was very favourable for the tribunes, could not fail to vex the senate; but circumstances obliged them to give their consent.

Year of Rome, 304. Abolition of the decemvirs.

New laws in favour of the people.

Virginius was tribune, and more anxious to punish the decemvirs, than any of his colleagues. He stood forth as the accuser of Appius; and, notwithstanding there was an appeal made to the people, seized his person, saying that a monster was not entitled to the protec-

The decemvirs punished.

tion of the laws, and that he deserved to be thrown into that prison, which he had insolently called, *The dwelling of the plebeians.* Appius died there before the day of trial, either by a voluntary death, as we are assured by Livy, or, according to the conjecture of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, by an order of the tribunes. Oppius, another decemvir, was likewise accused, and died in the same manner. The other eight secured themselves by a voluntary exile; but upon their estates being confiscated, a general amnesty was published, which dispelled all apprehensions.

The tribunes wish to continue in office.

It is the misfortune of society, that men seldom keep within the limits of justice; and that those people who are most zealous to punish the abuse of power in others, are the most likely to commit the same offence, when they get into authority. The tribunes wished to continue in office, and probably would have become as wicked as the decemvirs, if Duilius, one of their colleagues, who was a sensible man, and a lover of his country, had not defeated their intention. On the other hand, the senate showed themselves unjust, by refusing a triumph to the Consuls Valerius and Horatius, who had returned conquerors, only because they were displeased with their popularity. By declining to do justice to others, we almost always injure ourselves. The consuls, provoked at the behaviour of the senate, applied to the people, and obtained the honour they required.

Injustice of the people.

But the people, less instructed, and more apt to run into excess, very soon disgraced themselves by a contemptible act of injustice.

The Aricians, and the Ardeatæ contended for the right to some lands, and chose the Romans as arbiters to decide the dispute, when an old plebeian declared, that this territory being dependant on Corioli, was the property of Rome, and advised the Romans to take possession of it as their own right. In vain did the consuls represent the disgrace which must attend such shameful proceedings. That it would deprive the Romans of the esteem and confidence of other nations, and that, in affairs of honour and probity the loss was invaluable; but the people were deaf to these remonstrances, and the tribes decreed, that the territory belonged to Rome, without once reflecting that they might, one time or another, come to blush for the infamous transaction, which the senate very soon attempted to efface, by restoring the lands.

Year of Rome, 308. New disputes.

Intestine broils, which are in some degree the perpetual scourge of republics, whose constitution is always unsteady, prevailed in Rome more now than ever. Success always encourages people to become more enterprising, and each of the tribunes was anxious at this time to signalize himself by gaining some victory over the senate. One of the laws of the Twelve Tables prohibited marriages between patricians and plebeians, which raised an odious barrier betwixt the two orders. The first, by being in possession of the exclusive privilege to be chosen consuls, imagined that they were born to command; while the other, by the help of the tribuneship, were incessantly struggling to restore the natural equality. Canuleius, a hardy tribune, seconded by his colleagues, solemnly protested that he would oppose every attempt

to levy troops, until the liberty of intermarrying was restored, and even till a law should be passed, to entitle plebeians to be elected consuls as well as the patricians. On the eve of a war, it was necessary to show some condescension. The article of marriages was complied with; but from a dread of debasing the consular dignity, the senators proposed to create three military tribunes instead of consuls, indifferently from among the patricians or plebeians. The people having approved of this project, gave a very singular proof of their moderation, by electing three patricians to the new dignity. A few months after they resigned their office, upon pretence that the auspices had not been favourable. This was undoubtedly a device of the senate to put matters upon the former footing, and in fact the consulship was re-established; for the tribunes had no inducement to obstruct it, as they saw the people were resolved to give their votes in favour of the patricians, who, by their talents and abilities, were entitled to the preference.

Three military tribunes instead of consuls.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CENSORS TO THE BANISHMENT OF CAMILLUS.

Year of Rome, 310. Establishment of censors.

For seventeen years the numbering of the citizens had been omitted, and the interruption of this prudent custom disturbed the order of government; therefore the Consuls, Quintius

Capitolinus and M. Geganius, thought of restoring it; but being oppressed with too much business, to be able to discharge the duty themselves, as had been the practice of former consuls, they introduced a new magistracy, to whom this care was to be intrusted. This was the origin of censors. Their dignity appeared at first to be of so little consequence, that the tribunes did not vouchsafe to contend for it with the patricians; but in a few years it rose to be almost on a level with the consulship. The duty of the censors was to watch over the manners of the people, with a power of punishing and degrading any citizen, of whatever rank, that should be found offending. The care of the finances, and the support of the public buildings, were intrusted to them; and to this office, the glory and prosperity of Rome may in a great degree be ascribed; for, according to the excellent remark of Montesquieu, *Bad examples produce worse consequences than crimes, and more states have been ruined by infringements of morals, than by a violation of the laws.* By restraining vice, the censors averted a fatal contagion, which contaminates, dissolves, and, sooner or later, destroys the body politic.

Duration of the censorship.

The office of censor was fixed at first to continue five years, that is, from one *lustrum* to another, but was soon reduced to eighteen months, so that there was no censors during the remainder of the *lustrum*. This change was made by the dictator Emilius in three hundred and nineteen; and when the people had given their consent, he resigned the dictatorship, *To show*, said he, *that offices of long duration are not to my mind.* The two who were censors at that time,

and certainly unworthy of that rank, revenged themselves by expunging the name of Emilius from the register of his century, which deprived him of the right of voting, and imposing a tax upon him of eight times the usual rate. This great man restrained the indignation of the people, which was ready to burst forth upon the heads of the censors. He despised a mark of ignominy, which was occasioned by a meritorious deed.

Variations in the government.

Rome, perpetually agitated by factions, and always at war with her neighbours, often varied her plans of government. She had new military tribunes, who were afterwards displaced by the consuls. The tribunes of the people renewed their complaints, on account of the offices which were left in the hands of the patricians, and the Agrarian law. History would become tiresome by the repetition of these uniform details; I therefore omit numbers of them which afford no instruction.

A general killed by his soldiers.

The consul Posthumius, who had rendered himself detested by his severity, was stoned to death by his soldiers, and was the first instance, from the foundation of Rome, of a general being killed by his army. When morals and discipline were at an end, we shall see that even the blood of the Cæsars could not be spared.

Year of Rome, 347. Pay settled for the infantry.

About this time, we find a decree was passed in the senate, to allow pay to the soldiers who served in the infantry, and the people were transported with joy upon the occasion. They had been hitherto obliged to serve at their own expense, which was the cause of their running into debt, and of the misery and vexations that followed; but now they testified the most live-

ly gratitude to the senators, and declared that, from henceforth, they would cheerfully spill their blood in defence of their country. A sentiment worthy of such a people. *

Opposed by the tribunes, but in vain.

The tribunes being inclined to take amiss whatever was done by the senate, declaimed against this decree with affected zeal. They said, that the pay of the army would become a burden upon the people; that the old soldiers would not suffer their successors to be maintained at their cost, when they had all along served at their own expense; and lastly, that such innovations would prove fatal to the republic, by obtaining advantages for individuals; and their declamations began to influence some of the people; but the patricians having generously taxed themselves, and their example being followed by the rich plebeians, the murmers soon ceased. Even the poor were willing to contribute, and the senate projected greater enterprises.

Advantages of this decree.

Hitherto, their wars were only incursions into the country of the enemy, and battles which were seldom decisive. A campaign of twenty or thirty days exhausted the whole resources of the troops, and they were obliged to return, without having accomplished any thing of consequence. Their power could only be extended by armies, supported at the expense of the republic. Here then we see a remarkable

* In the time of Polybius, the private foot-soldier had two oboli a day, the centurion four, and the trooper six. He tells us, that the medium price of a bushel of wheat was four oboli, and was sufficient to serve a soldier eight days. If we were only to consider their maintenance, the pay was very considerable; but soldiers were not provided at that time with every necessary, as they are at present.

change in their system. The establishment of armies serving for pay, will be found to form an epoch equally critical in modern governments.

Year of Rome, 348. Famous siege of Veii.

They immediately resolved upon the siege of Veii. This city of Tuscany, in the neighbourhood of Rome, was excessively rich and very strong, and the inhabitants were mortal enemies of the Romans. They attacked this city in a manner, of which their history hitherto has not afforded us any example. They made lines of circumvallation and contravallation, the one to guard against sallies from the city, and the other against the attacks of those who came to relieve the besieged. The military tribunes, for at that time there were no consuls, intending to pass the winter in the lines, ordered the soldiers to erect barracks, and were the more readily obeyed, as the troops preferred the camp to the city, where their pay would have been immediately withdrawn. But the tribunes of the people made this advantageous scheme a subject of complaint and abuse. They exclaimed against the generals for having conspired the destruction of the soldiers, and making an attempt against the liberty of the people; with such a malignant eye are the best things seen by party spirit; but happily they were not credited. The Veians having surprised the besiegers, and burnt all their machines, so far were the citizens from murmuring at this check, that their zeal on the contrary was redoubled. Rich and poor desired to serve at the siege, and declared they would not return till Veii was taken.

Camillus takes Veii after a ten years siege.

A misunderstanding among the generals, the

caprice of the tribunes of the people, the plague, superstition, and the efforts of the enemy, all together contributed to protract the war to a great length; but Camillus was chosen dictator, and was worthy of bringing it to a conclusion. As he despaired of taking the place by assault, he dug a passage under ground by which his army could enter the city. When the work was finished, being persuaded that he would carry the town, he wrote to the senate, to know what they chose to have done with the plunder. After some disputes, they agreed that it should be divided among the army, and whoever should go to join them. This was a means of suddenly increasing the army; and while one part attacked the ramparts, the other entered the city by the subterranean passage, and took it after ten years siege. One of the tribunes proposed, that a half of the citizens should settle there; but Camillus and the senate wisely rejected this proposal, from an apprehension that Rome and Veii would become the capitals of two states; and therefore, only divided the lands among such of the people as chose to form a colony in the country of the Veians.

Year of Rome, 357. Scheme to settle half of the citizens in Veii.

Some time after, they laid siege to Falerii, a city of the Falisci. It is difficult to believe the story that is told of a schoolmaster, who, walking out of the town daily during the siege with his scholars, at last went to the camp of Camillus, and delivered up the youth to that general, whose conduct we cannot help applauding, whether the account be well or ill founded. The expression put into his mouth by Livy, is the law of humanity. *Without being united with*

Falerii taken by the same general.

the Falisci by treaty, we are, and always shall be, united to them by the law of nature. War has its rules as well as peace, and we know how to carry it on with no less justice than bravery. According to the historian, Camillus sent the traitor back to the city with his hands tied behind him, and scourged with rods by his scholars; when the besieged, being struck with admiration of the disinterested virtue of the Romans, immediately sued for peace.

Camillus accused by one of the tribunes.

Camillus was, in the mean time, accused by one of the tribunes, of having appropriated part of the plunder of Veii to himself. It is true, that after the spoils were divided, he had demanded a tenth part to be returned, to accomplish a vow which was made in honour of Apollo. The priests had been consulted upon the subject of the vow, which was zealously fulfilled, and for which purpose the women so far concurred, as to sacrifice their jewels. Rolin makes a reflection upon this occasion, which possibly may mislead. 'The Romans knew,' said he, 'that a vow is an engagement entered into with the Deity, and a solemn promise made to him, from which nothing can be retrenched; and if it is a crime to break a promise made to men, it is a sacrilegious impiety to fail with respect to God.' Ought not this pious writer to have added, that great abuses may arise from vows inspired by superstition; that in such a case they ought not to be held in such estimation; and that the Romans would have deserved greater praise if their piety had been better founded? Their mistaken religion frequently obliged them to fulfil vows, which an enlightened understanding would have prevented them from making.

Let what will have been the vow of Camillus, the people were provoked, not only at his having deprived them of a part of the plunder, but likewise at his having triumphed in too insolent a manner. To prevent an iniquitous sentence, Camillus banished himself, while he prayed to the gods, according to some authors, that his ungrateful country might regret the loss of him. When Aristides was leaving Athens to go into banishment, he begged the contrary. If the Grecian displayed a virtuous disposition superior to the Roman, Rome at least equalled Athens in injustice. As Cicero observes, superior merit was always exposed to persecution in the ancient republics. *Let no one have superior merit with us*, said the Ephesians when they banished Hermodorus; *if a man thinks himself eminent, let him go to another country.* * That absurd expression displays a sentiment which was at that time very common; but necessity made them regret the loss of men of abilities. Rome very soon became sensible, that the want of Camillus could not be supplied.

He goes into voluntary exile.

* Tusc. 5.

FIFTH EPOCH.

ROME TAKEN BY THE GAULS. PROGRESS OF THE ROMANS IN ITALY.

FROM THE YEAR OF ROME THREE HUNDRED AND SIXTY THREE, TO FOUR HUNDRED AND SEVENTY ONE.

CHAPTER I.

IRRUPTION OF THE GAULS INTO ITALY. THE TAKING OF ROME. LAWS OF LICINIUS.

Irruption of the Gauls in Italy.

THE Gauls who inhabited the country lying between the Seine and Garonne, as far as the Alps, which was called Celtic Gaul, had made an incursion into Italy in the time of the first Tarquin, and returned frequently after in search of settlements. To them is ascribed the founding of Mediolanum, Comum, Brixia, Cremona, and some other cities. In the year of Rome three hundred and sixty-two, a new swarm of these barbarians, enticed by Aruns of Clusium in Tuscany, to whom his fellow-citizens had refused to do justice, arrived in Italy. It is said, that the Italian wines were the allurements which he offered to the Gauls, to persuade them to espouse his cause. Having laid siege to Clu-

sium, the inhabitants implored assistance from Rome; and though the senate had no particular inducement to make them interfere in the fate of the Tuscans, they sent three young patricians to negociate a peace; but the imprudence of these ambassadors made the storm fall upon Rome herself.

The Roman ambassadors violate the law of nations.

They desired to know of Brennus, the chief of the Gauls, by what right he invaded Tuscany; to which he replied, That the Clusians having lands of which they made no use, unjustly refused them to the Gauls, who had as much right to them, as the Romans had to those of which they had taken possession; that every thing was the property of the brave, who derived their right from the sword. These reasons gave a faithful picture of the character of a people to whom they were familiar. The ambassadors, dissembling their indignation, desired that they might have leave to enter the town, on pretence of holding a conference with the besieged; but, instead of recommending a peace, they put themselves at the head of the Clusians, and fought against the Gauls.

Brennus demands satisfaction.

Brennus immediately marched to Rome, and sent a herald to demand satisfaction, and to require that the guilty might be delivered up to his vengeance. The senate, in perplexity, left the affair to the decision of the people, who, far from disapproving of what had been done by the ambassadors, chose them military tribunes for the following year. This could not fail to irritate the Gauls, who hastened their march, declaring that now they would have to do only with the Romans.

Year of Rome, 363. Battle of Alia and taking of Rome.

The Romans, governed by six military tribunes, without consuls, went to meet the enemy with a very inferior force, which was still weaker from a total relaxation of military discipline. Even the number of their generals was a sufficient obstruction, and, without almost striking a blow, they were defeated at the battle of Allia. They had omitted to consult the augurs, which the politics of the senate had rendered respectable in the eyes of a superstitious people, and undoubtedly it was one cause of the soldiers being disheartened. Rome was filled with fear and consternation; the old men, women, and children, fled to the neighbouring cities, while the youth shut themselves up in the Capitol, being resolved to defend it to the last extremity. Fourscore illustrious senators, by a vow, devoted themselves to death; a patriotic consecration, to which they annexed an idea that it would terrify the enemy. The Gauls arrived, and massacred these venerable men, sitting immovable in their curule chairs. They then attacked the Capitol, but being repulsed, set fire to the city. It was upon this occasion that the ancient historical monuments were destroyed.

The old senators devote themselves to death.

Camillus recalled and chosen dictator.

If Camillus had preferred the wretched gratifications of revenge to the duties of a citizen, Rome would have been ruined beyond all remedy; but always animated with a love of his country, and, perhaps, with a desire of commanding the Romans, he persuaded the Ardeatæ, with whom he lived in exile, to take arms against the Gauls, a part of whom were employed in laying waste the country in the

neighbourhood of Rome, and he cut a detachment of them in pieces. Upon this advantage being gained, the Romans took courage, and entreated him to assume the command. Being convinced that the supreme power was lodged in the hands of those who defended the Capitol, he insisted upon having their consent. A young plebeian undertook to execute this dangerous message, and returned to acquaint Camillus that he was chosen dictator.

The Capitol saved by Manlius.

Manlius, who had formerly been consul, saved the Capitol when attacked in the night by the Gauls. The story of the geese being more watchful than dogs, and giving the alarm to Manlius, may be doubted; but it is certain that, from that time, geese were honoured in Rome, whereas the dogs were detested, and even punished, for one was publicly impaled every year. These trifles kept up the idea, in the minds of a superstitious people, that heaven miraculously interposed for the preservation of the republic. As geese were consecrated to Juno, she undoubtedly made use of their cries for the preservation of Rome.

The circumstances which followed have little more probability. After a blockade of seven months, according to Livy and the generality of historians, both besiegers and besieged, being equally dejected with want and diseases, they met to hold a conference, when Brennus demanded a thousand pounds weight of gold; and the Romans, upon these terms, consented to purchase a dishonourable peace. The sum was brought by Sulpicius, who complained that the Gauls used false scales; upon which Bren-

nus added his sword to the weight, exclaiming, *Woe to the conquered!* Camillus arriving at that instant as dictator, broke the agreement. *It is with iron, and not with gold,* cried he, *that Romans must be redeemed.* They instantly engaged, when the Gauls were entirely cut in pieces, so that there was not a single man left to carry home the news of their disaster.

Independent of the marvellous, which makes this account much to be doubted, the relation of it, as given by Polybius, does not allow us to give credit to it. He tells us, that the Gauls accommodated matters with the Romans, and gave up their city to fly to the defence of their own country, which was attacked by the Veneti. How came such an useful and important remark to escape the authors of the English Universal History, which, notwithstanding his little turn for criticism, did not escape Rollin?

The city rebuilt, but without order.

Rome was rebuilt in one year, like a village, without regularity, and the common sewers were found even under private houses. Far from making any progress in the arts, the Romans seem rather to have declined from the time that republican government was established. More tranquil under monarchy, they might undoubtedly have been able to execute some finer works; but accustomed to be led by the present conjuncture, order never could prevail.

Manlius accused of aiming at tyranny.

Manlius, who had saved the Capitol, a patrician distinguished by his services, who had deserved and obtained thirty-seven military rewards, civic, mural, and other crowns, for one of the great instruments of Roman policy was to excite valour by making it respected, it is

said, aimed at obtaining sovereign power. He supported, and stirred up the plebeians against the nobles; paid the debts of the poor; delivered them from their creditors; and made use of the dangerous talent of flattery, that he might gain the minds of the people, to bring them afterwards into subjection; but, like many others, he was himself the victim of his ambition. Cossus being chosen dictator by the senate, he caused Manlius to be seized, and such was the authority of a dictator, that no one dared to offer the least obstruction.

When Cossus resigned his office, Manlius being set at liberty, renewed his intrigues, and was accused before the people. Historians tell us, that, on purpose to obtain a sentence against him, the assembly of the people was obliged to be held out of the Campus Martius, in a place from whence the Capitol could not be seen, so much did that object impress the people in his favour, and he was thrown headlong even from the Tarpeian rock. The people repented and regretted what they had done, believing that Jupiter, in anger, revenged his death, by sending a plague, which began soon after he had suffered. Year of Rome, 370. He is put to death.

Melius, a Roman knight, several years before this, three hundred and fourteen, was suspected of aiming at tyranny, because he had distributed corn to the people in the time of a famine. Cincinnatus, at that time very old, was chosen dictator; and Servilius, his general of horse, killed Melius with his own hand, after he had been rescued from the lictor by the populace. The dictator congratulated Servilius on having delivered his country from a tyrant. A similar instance of Melius.

Such instances, which are very frequent in the Roman history, serve, perhaps, as much to prove the restless jealousy of the senate, as their hatred of royalty. Whoever showed himself a friend of the people, always occasioned jealousy in the patricians; and I much question their being scrupulous about the proofs of tyranny, which made them put to death so many illustrious citizens. The instance of the Gracchi, which we shall have occasion to mention, will strengthen this conjecture; but let us resume the thread of our history.

The vanity of a woman brings about very important consequences.

The trivial wars with the neighbours of Rome were renewed; but the only objects worthy of our attention are the domestic dissentions, and the alterations which they produced in the mode of government. An advantage which had always been disputed with the people, was about to be obtained for them by the vanity of a woman. Two daughters of Fabius Ambustus, a patrician, were married, the one to a military tribune, the other to a rich plebeian. The wife of the plebeian being one day at her sister's, and seeing the respect that was shown to her as the wife of one of the chiefs of the state, was seized with vexation at being confounded with the crowd. She appeared melancholy wherever she went, and her father, anxious to know the cause, at last wrested the secret from her. *You have married me*, said she, *into a family which is excluded from sharing the honours of the republic. What a difference between my sister's situation and mine!* Fabius loved her tenderly, and promised that she should be satisfied.

Experience never could bring a better proof of great effects being produced from small causes. The thoughts of the father were solely employed on finding the means of gratifying his daughter. Her husband Licinius, and Sextius, a young plebeian of uncommon merit, joined in his views, and having got themselves elected tribunes of the people, proposed some laws which were entirely contrary to the interest of the senate. They wanted the military tribuneships to be abolished, the consuls restored, and from that time forward one of the consuls to be a plebeian. To obtain this law, they added two others, still more terrible to the patricians. The first was, that all the interest which had been already paid, should be deducted from the principal of his debts, and that the remainder should be discharged by three equal payments from one year to another. The second was, that no citizen should possess more than five hundred jugera of land, and that the overplus should be divided among the poor who had no property.

Year of Rome, 377. Laws of Licinius contrary to the interests of the senate.

It is easy to conceive how these laws disturbed the senate, and heated the minds of the people. Discord revived, cabals increased, and all was confusion and uproar. The patricians had recourse to policy, and gained over the rest of the tribunes, who, by a single word, stopped the deliberations, and prevented the suffrages from being collected. Licinius and Sextius, employing the same weapons against their colleagues, prevented the election of magistrates, and, continuing still in office, renewed the same obstructions for five years together, so that the republic fell into downright

The tribunes disagree among themselves.

anarchy. A war with the people of Velitræ made them sensible of the necessity of choosing leaders; and six military tribunes, as formerly, were set at the head of affairs. Velitræ was besieged, but that did not prevent dissensions at Rome.

Licinius and Sextius incense the people against the senate.

Licinius and Sextius being chosen tribunes of the people for the eighth time, were the more formidable to their opponents, as they set in motion every spring that can affect the human heart. They pressed the nobles with interrogatories, to which they could not reply but by wounding the minds of the people. 'Is it just that you should possess more than five hundred jugera of land, while the greatest part of the plebeians have no more than two, in which they have scarce room to build themselves a cottage and a tomb? Must the people, oppressed with debts, for ever languish in chains, and the house of every patrician become a prison? Can the Roman people think themselves freed from the yoke of royalty, while they continue to groan under the tyranny of the nobles? Is there any remedy for these evils, but to divide the consular power between the plebeians and patricians?' The people greedily catched at these reasons, but the tribunes were divided; yet Licinius and Sextius showed that they were resolved to overcome every opposition. In such a critical situation, the senate saw the necessity of choosing a dictator, and appointed Camillus, who, since the deliverance of Rome, had signalized himself by gaining a number of other victories.

Camillus chosen dictator for the fifth time.

As that great man found that he could not bring the tribunes to obey, he suddenly resign-

ed the dictatorship; but, though he was fourscore years of age, he was elected to that dignity a fifth time, because the Gauls were returning to attack Rome. The cutting swords of the Gauls, being handled both with skill and strength, were one of the main causes of their victory at Allia; the dictator, therefore, to prevent them from the same advantages, gave the Romans helmets of brass, bucklers covered with plates of iron, and long spears to prevent the strokes of the sword. He defeated the Gauls; received the submission of the inhabitants of Velitræ; was honoured with a triumph; and was obliged to contend with the tribunes.

He defeats the Gauls.

However much they respected the person of Camillus, the dictatorship, by being too common, no longer impressed the minds of the people with that dread and veneration which it had done formerly. Objects which men are accustomed to see, grow familiar; and it is an egregious fault to be lavish of that which, to be useful, must be uncommon. As the place where the public assemblies met was almost become a field of battle, Sextius and Licinius were so daring as to insult the dictator. One of their officers presumed to lay hold of him, but was beaten off by the patricians. Camillus marched to the Capitol, and made a vow to build a temple to Concord when the public tranquillity should be restored. The senate at last found themselves obliged to yield to the people, and to allow them to choose a plebeian consul. All the proceedings of the tribunes aimed at this point, and were only employed as means to obtain it; but, however, the law which limited possessions to five hundred jugera, was at the same time accepted.

Year of Rome, 386. The dictator insulted.

CHAPTER II.

THE PLEBEIANS ADMITTED TO THE CONSULSHIP. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PRÆTOR AND CURULE EDILES. WAR WITH THE CAMPANIANS AND LATINS.

Plebeian consul.

THE consular dignity was now conferred upon a new man, by the plebeians having chosen Sextius the tribune. Notwithstanding the prejudices of the nobles, it was for the advantage of the republic that merit could raise plebeians to the highest honours of the state. Camillus obtained from the people, as if in exchange, that a new office should be instituted to which only patricians should be eligible, which was called the Prætorship. The consuls being often engaged in war, and unable to adminster justice, the prætor, for at first there was only one, was intrusted with this essential duty of government. At the same time, two patrician or *curule* ediles were created, whose province was to take care of the temples, theatres, games, public squares, the walls of the city, and other duties.

The prætor and curule ediles.

Nobility attached to the curule offices.

The curule offices, so called, because they who bore them had a privilege of being carried in an ivory chair, were the consulship, censorship, dictatorship, prætorship, and this new office of edile. They entitled the descendants of those who had enjoyed them to the rank of nobility. Thus a difference was made between *noble* and *patrician*. Vanity, always ingenious

in contriving distinction, made one likewise between the noble patricians and the noble plebeians.

Camillus, *that singularly excellent man either in good or bad fortune*, as Livy called him, was carried off by the plague, which put a total stop to the rejoicings of the people. According to the natural bias of the human race, people in dismay give themselves up to superstition; but at this time it had lost its former austerity. It is alleged that superstition instituted the scenical games, or theatrical representations, to appease the offended gods; and likewise restored the ceremony of the *lectisternium*, which had been twice performed already, and consisted in setting up beds in the temples, into which the statues of the gods and goddesses were put, to whom a feast was served up, though it was eaten by men. The scenical games, and the lectisternium.

As all this was not sufficient to deliver them from the plague, it was proposed by some old men to renew an ancient custom, long discontinued, of driving a nail into the wall of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, accompanied with a solemn ceremony, and for which purpose it was necessary to choose a dictator. Manlius Imperiosus was nominated, and drove the sacred nail. It had been a custom, from ignorance of the numerical characters both in Tuscany and Rome, to mark the number of years with nails, which was performed by the consul, and undoubtedly it was from thence that the fantastical idea of attaching so much importance to such a trifle was derived. Nothing is incredible of superstition, particularly among the Romans. A dictator chosen to drive the sacred nail.

Action of young Manlius.

Manlius, haughty and severe, would have made a bad use of his power as dictator, if the tribunes of the people had not obliged him to resign soon after the ceremony. Afterwards, one of them accused him of oppressing the citizens, and even his own son, whom he obliged to work in the country like a slave, because of a defect in his speech. But his son, being informed of the accusation, forgot the cruelty of his father, and, coming to Rome, hastened to the house of the tribune, where, presenting a dagger to his throat, he compelled him to swear that he would not continue the prosecution. The people approved of an action which proceeded from filial affection, though, in other respects, reprehensible.

I shall not stop to describe the single combat between Manlius Torquatus and a giant of the Gauls, whom he stript of a gold collar after he had killed him, in presence of both armies; nor a similar engagement of Valerius Corvus, who was said to have been assisted by a raven that perched upon his helmet; nor the miracle of the gulf into which Curtius threw himself headlong, because the augurs had declared that it would close when what they had of the greatest value was thrown into it; nor other facts of the same kind, which have either been invented or exaggerated by national pride. I hasten to that period when we shall give the history of the Punic war; and, in the mean time, shall only collect such matter as will afford proper subjects for reflection.

Plebeian consul defeated.

The Roman valour was continually employed in carrying on new wars. Genucius, the plebeian consul, suffered himself to be surpris-

ed by the Hernici, when his army forsook him, and he was killed in the field. Upon which the patricians exclaimed against the new law, as if a general taken from the body of the plebeians could not fail to be defeated. However, Licinius was a second time chosen consul, and was not defeated.

Licinius infringes his own law.

His laws had made him hated by the nobility, and, by infringing them, he brought a just accusation against himself. Instead of only five hundred jugera of land, he possessed more than a thousand; but, to evade the law, had made a pretended resignation of one half to his son, having already emancipated him. When he was out of office the fraud was proved, and he was condemned to pay a fine.

Reduction of interests.

Avarice is always ingenious to get rid of the fetters imposed on it by law. If the holding property in common be not firmly established as it was at Sparta, it seems impossible to have it confined within narrow limits. The Romans, constantly acquiring lands, and having a power to dispose of their property by will, the Licinian law, of course, must fall to the ground; The interest of money was fixed at one *per cent.*; but that was only a means of rousing the desires of usury. Ten years after, the interest was again lowered one half.

The plebeians obtain the censorship.

Rutilus, a plebeian dictator, having defeated the Tuscans, the jealous patricians became more desirous to recover their ancient prerogatives. They succeeded so as to keep the consulship for some years in their own body; but the people complained; dissensions were renewed; and it was necessary to satisfy the plebeians, who thereby opened to themselves

the way to the censorship. The power of creating senators being transferred from the consuls to the senators, greatly increased the authority of that office.

Year of Rome, 420. The Campanians submit to the Romans.

A terrible war was kindled between the Romans and Samnites, who had already attacked, and were upon the point of reducing the Campanians, an effeminate people, whose capital, the famous city of Capua, trembled at the approach of the enemy. The Campanians implored the protection of Rome; but were told, that as the republic was united by a solemn treaty with the Samnites it could not be broken. To remove this obstacle, they yielded themselves to the Romans, who received them with open arms. Upon which ambassadors were sent to desire that the Samnites would not meddle with a country dependent on Rome, and with instructions to assume the language of threatening, if entreaties did not avail. The indignation of the Samnites burst forth by laying waste the country of Campania, and war was immediately declared by the Romans.

The army corrupted at Capua.

The fate of the war turned in favour of the party most accustomed to conquer; but woful experience had already shown, that austere manners, so necessary to a republic, were not proof against contagion. The Roman soldiers, seduced by the pleasures of Capua, entered into an infamous plot to drive out the Campanians, and take possession of their country. Rutilus, the consul, having prevented the effects of this plot, a number of the conspirators marched against Rome. This was a most unheard-of outrage, and Valerius Corvus was chosen dictator to stop its progress; which he effected

without bloodshed, by persuading the mutineers to lay down their arms. The Samnites being defeated, they sued for peace, and renewed their alliance with Rome.

Revolt of the Campanians and Latins.

The Latins, in the mean time, wanted either to shake off the yoke, or be admitted to share the first honours of Rome, and joined the Campanians and some others in a revolt. The two consuls, Manlius Torquatus and Decius Mus, signalized themselves in the course of this war. Decius, upon seeing the Romans give ground, devoting himself to the infernal gods, and, rushing into the midst of the Latin army, died a victim to save his country. Manlius had condemned his own son to death for fighting without his orders, and gained a complete victory, which may be ascribed to the enthusiasm with which the soldiers are animated by such examples. Several years after, during a war with Pyrrhus, the son of Decius devoted himself as his father had done, and with the same success to the army. These remarkable actions, so likely to affect credulous minds, almost always succeed while superstition prevails.

The Latins admitted to the privileges of Roman citizens.

The Latins being at last reduced, Camillus the consul, grandson of the famous dictator, to attach them to the state, and to increase the number of citizens, recommended their being admitted to the privileges of Romans. *The sole means of establishing a firm dominion*, said he, *is to act in such a manner as shall make the people happy in obeying*. This prudent policy contributed more than every thing else to increase the Roman power. The senate followed their old maxims, but made a difference, according to the greater or less degrees of guilt among the con-

quered. Several of the Latin states were admitted to the rights of the city, while others had part of their lands taken from them. Velitræ was razed to the ground, because it had frequently revolted. The Campanians were plundered, and colonies sent to different places. Rome derived great advantage from her late victories, which foreboded the conquest of all Italy.

Bold reply of a Privernian.

Privernum, a Volscian city, revolted some time after, and was soon reduced. It was debated in what manner the prisoners should be treated. A number of the senators thought that they deserved to be put to death, but the spirited noble reply of one of the inhabitants saved the whole. He was asked, what punishment he thought his fellow-citizens deserved? *That which men deserve who think themselves worthy of liberty*, answered he. But if you are pardoned, added Plautius the consul, how will you behave? *Our behaviour*, replied the prisoner, *depends upon yours. If you grant us equitable terms, we will remain faithful; but if you impose harsh and unjust conditions, our fidelity will be but of short duration.* The Romans thought nobly; and, on this occasion, looked upon these men who were jealous of liberty as worthy of their republic, and admitted them as fellow-citizens.

Pretended conspiracy of women against their husbands.

At a time when the glory of Rome increased with her power, a hundred and seventy women, according to some three hundred and seventy, were convicted of having prepared poison for their husbands when an epidemic disorder was prevailing, and escaped punishment by poisoning themselves. That crime was so little known, that they had no law against poisoners. The

plot was ascribed to a kind of madness, and believed to be a scourge sent from heaven. A dictator was therefore chosen to drive the sacred nail in the temple of the Capitol. Livy durst not certify such an improbable fact. The most corrupt city in the world could scarce have been guilty of such a phrenzy. Rome was not immoral.

Laws to forbid imprisonment for debt.

The people still continued to suffer from the cruelty of their creditors. By a law of the Twelve Tables they had a power to seize the persons of insolvent debtors, and to keep them in slavery till they had discharged their debts by their services. Publius, a young plebeian, having devoted himself to this slavery to relieve his father, was unworthily treated by the creditor, from whom he therefore made his escape, and laid his complaint before the assembly of the people; upon which the senate passed a decree, whereby creditors were prohibited from putting debtors in chains, whose property, and not their persons, should be responsible for their debts. This law, so important to liberty, was confirmed by the assembly of the people; but it was not always respected by the insatiable cravings of avarice.

CHAPTER III.

WAR WITH THE SAMNITES. APPIUS CHOSEN CENSOR. PLEBEIANS ADMITTED TO THE PRIESTHOOD.

Papirius attempts to punish Fabius.

THE Samnites had again taken up arms, and were defeated by Fabius, general of the horse, in the absence, and contrary to the orders of Papirius the dictator, who repaired to the camp to punish him for disobedience, and ordered his lictors to strip him, and prepare the rod and axes; but the army opposing the punishment, Fabius fled for shelter to Rome, where his father appealed from the sentence of the dictator to the people. Papirius pleaded against them; insisted upon the military laws, and the necessity of preserving subordination inviolable, and quoted the examples of Brutus and Manlius. The people, not daring to pronounce against him, joined to implore his clemency; and the family of the Fabii, throwing themselves at his feet, begged for mercy. In such case the severity of the laws might be softened without an injury to discipline. The prudent dictator, therefore, made use of his absolute authority to pronounce pardon.

Year of Rome, 482. The Romans disgraced by the Samnites.

The Romans, vain of having gained so many victories, thought the disgrace which they suffered at the straits of Caudium intolerable. This was a defile near Caudium, into which they were drawn by a stratagem of Pontius, the general of the Samnites, and found themselves

shut up as in a prison. Pontius was advised by his father, either to behave to them with generosity, or to massacre every man of them. But he chose to take a worse step, which was to make them pass under the yoke, and to dismiss them, upon the consuls giving their word that the war should be ended. By this means he left them the power of being revenged for the affront.

The consul Posthumius renews the war.

The hearts of the soldiers were preyed upon by silent rage, and the ignominy they had suffered raised anger rather than consternation in the city. The senate declared that the Roman people were not to be bound by treaties made without their orders. Posthumius, the consul, who had concluded it, desired to be delivered up with the other officers, that the republic might be freed from all obligations. That good faith, which has been so much praised in the Romans, did not appear to advantage on this occasion. Posthumius, as had been previously agreed upon, struck the herald who delivered him up, and cried out, *Now I am a Samnite, and you are the ambassador of Rome. I have violated the laws of nations, and Rome may go to war.* Pontius, justly provoked at such a mean artifice, refused to deliver the prisoners that were in his possession; so that both parties prepared for a bloody war.

The Romans are revenged. Treaty with the Samnites.

During the many years which this war lasted, the Samnites were constantly defeated, and suffered irreparable losses. Pontius, their general, was led in triumph to Rome, with his hands tied behind him, and, so far from being respected for his valour, was barbarously beheaded. Four-and-twenty triumphs, which the

Romans celebrated for victories gained over their enemies, cost them much blood; and the senate at length hearkened to proposals for a treaty of peace, when the consul Curius Dentatus, who was much more respectable on account of his virtues than his high rank, was intrusted with drawing up the articles. *This* great man, who preferred a life of poverty, was eating his repast out of a wooden dish, when the Samnite ambassadors came to beg an audience, and offered him a considerable sum of money to procure his interest in their favour. *My poverty*, said he, *undoubtedly made you expect to corrupt my honour; but I love rather to command those who have gold, than to be myself the owner*. If there is pride in this expression, it is the pride of a noble soul. After a war of forty-nine years, a treaty of alliance was concluded, though it is not known what were the terms.

Curius Dentatus incorruptible.

Several other Italian states, particularly the Galli Senones, who had settled upon the coast of the Adriatic, were obliged, about the same time, to submit to the Roman power. *In* fifty-five days, the Æqui lost no less than forty-one towns, which were undoubtedly, for the most part, only large villages. The Romans reckoned at this time two hundred and seventy-three thousand citizens able to bear arms; so that Rome might be expected to execute very great undertakings.

Other nations of Italy subdued.

Some remarkable changes happened during this epoch. Appius Claudius, who was censor in the year four hundred and forty-one, and was continued for five years, but most remarkable for having constructed an aqueduct seven miles long; and for the Appian Way, which reached

Censorship of Appius.

as far as Capua, showed himself the enemy of the senate as much as his ancestors had been violent in asserting their prerogatives. He admitted the sons of freedmen into the senate, which was an abuse they soon suppressed. This same censor distributed some of the lower people of the city into all the tribes, so that, by having the majority of votes, he made himself master of their decisions. But the famous general, Fabius, being elected censor, very soon remedied this disorder; for the whole populace were immediately settled in the four tribes of the city, so that their votes could not weigh down the scale. This useful reformation procured him the surname of Maximus, which was handed down to his posterity. He had not gained so much honour by all his victories and triumphs. It must be allowed, that a wholesome law may procure advantages greatly superior to victories.

The plebeians admitted to the priesthood.

The patricians always kept the priesthood in their possession; an important prerogative among a superstitious people, who were to be led by auspices and religious ceremonies. Two tribunes of the people, both of the name of Ogulnius, attacked the patricians upon this head, and caused four pontiffs and five augurs to be created from the body of the plebeians.

The fasti and the formulary published by Flavius.

Flavius, the son of a freedman, having become curule edile a few years before this time, and being despised by the nobles on account of his birth, revenged himself, by publishing the *fasti*, calendars, and the formulary of the laws. The pontiffs made a great mystery of them to support their own power, and it was only through them that the proper days for plead-

ing could be known, or the necessary forms that were required in carrying on processes. They, therefore, endeavoured to keep the people dependent, by keeping them in ignorance, which is the same, we formerly observed to be the practice of the priests in Asia, Egypt, and other countries. This zeal for the interest of their order would not have been so ardent at Rome, where the priests were more truly citizens, if it had not been that the nobility looked upon the priesthood as part of their exclusive privileges, and an instrument by which they might be maintained or extended.

SIXTH EPOCH.

WAR WITH PYRRHUS, FOLLOWED BY THE PUNIC WAR. THE ROMANS BECOME FORMIDABLE OUT OF ITALY.

FROM THE YEAR OF ROME FOUR HUNDRED AND SEVENTY ONE TO FIVE HUNDRED AND FIFTY TWO.

CHAPTER I.

WAR WITH THE TARENTINES. PYRRHUS DEFEATED IN ITALY. PARTICULAR ANECDOTES.

By continual wars, and subduing her neighbours, Rome paved the way for greater conquests, and the time was now at hand, when, impelled by ambition, she was to shine in a new sphere. There was but a single spark wanting to kindle that flame which successively set on fire every part of the known world; and we now come to show its origin and progress.

Among the cities of Magna Græcia, situated on the south coasts of Italy, Tarentum, a colony from Sparta, was most eminently distinguished by her wealth, luxury, pride, and voluptuousness. The Tarentines detested the Romans as dreadful conquerors, and despised them as barbarians. They had already, in private, begun to set some springs in motion against them, and at last provoked them in a manner which it was impossible to forgive. Having insulted some

Year of Rome, 471. The Tarentines insult the Romans.

Roman galleys, which had anchored in their port, they completed the outrage, by affronting the ambassadors who were sent to demand satisfaction. One of them, even made water upon the robe of Posthumius, who was of consular dignity, and chief of the embassy, which the people applauded with loud peals of laughter. *Laugh now*, cried Posthumius, *you will weep by and by. The stain upon my habit will be washed in your blood.* The Tarentines were intoxicated at the time of their committing this excess, and very soon began to dread the consequence; they therefore applied for assistance to Pyrrhus king of Epirus, one of the greatest warriors of Greece, and formed under the generals of Alexander.

Ambition of the king of Epirus.

This prince, who was as brave and ambitious as Alexander, shut up in a small obscure kingdom, was anxious to signalize himself by bold enterprises, from whence he expected to derive great advantages. His minister, the famous Cyneas, a disciple of Demosthenes in eloquence, a profound politician, and able general, in vain represented to him that he was pursuing chimerical happiness, and that he would enjoy much greater felicity by making a prudent use of what he already possessed, than by tormenting himself in the vain search of useless and uncertain conquests. But Pyrrhus was deaf to every thing except what was suggested by his ruling passion. He already fancied himself master of all Italy, from whence he could rapidly extend his dominion on every side; but, the better to conceal his intentions, he seemed to yield to the entreaties of the Tarentines with reluctance, and desired they would detain him as short a time in Italy as possible.

Cyneas very soon arrived with three thousand men at Tarentum, and, while he waited for the king, put the citadel in order. Pyrrhus very soon followed his minister with three thousand horse, twenty elephants, and twenty thousand heavy-armed infantry. He found the Tarentines immersed in indolence and effeminacy, and expecting to pursue their pleasures while his army should fight for their protection; but they had given themselves up to a master, who, by his orders, instantly changed the face of affairs. The theatres were shut up, and the festivals discontinued. These voluptuous people were obliged to submit to military discipline, and saw themselves incorporated with the troops of Epirus. Many of them fled, as they could not submit to labour or constraint even for the defence of their country. So much do men degenerate in the bosom of luxury and idleness, that the Tarentines were become a nation of women.

The Tarentines subjected to discipline.

Some young libertines, who had abused the king when in their cups, were saved by a stroke of humour. The king sent for them next day to punish them for their insolence, when, being reproached for their misbehaviour, *Truly*, replied one of them, *if our wine had not been exhausted we should have done worse, we should have assassinated you.* Pyrrhus either despised the discourse of drunkards, or thought it was more to his honour to pardon them.

He pardons some insolent debauchees.

Levinus the Roman consul, in the mean time, advanced into the country, and the two armies fought with the greatest courage, when the Grecian prince, too easily distinguished by his brillant armour, was exposed to the most imminent danger; but he put on other arms,

Year of Rome, 473. Battle of Heraclea.

in which he equally proved his valour, and, aided by the use of elephants, gained the victory. The Romans, who had never before seen any, were frightened at the sight of these monstrous animals loaded with combatants; the horses terrified, ran away with their riders, and the disorder becoming general, the whole army took to flight: however, they had made such slaughter, that Pyrrhus said upon the occasion, *By another such victory I shall be ruined.* Nevertheless, he continued his march towards Rome, and arrived within seven leagues of the city, when the approach of two consular armies made him retire.

Fabricius raises the admiration of the Greeks.

They sent ambassadors to him to treat about the ransom or exchange of prisoners, and the virtuous Fabricius, still poor, though placed in the highest rank, was one of the embassy. The money which was offered to him by Pyrrhus, only served to show his contempt for riches. Cyneas was one day explaining to him the principles of the sect of the Epicureans which he professed, when the Roman exclaimed, *O ye gods, may such be the doctrine followed by our enemies, while they are at war with Rome!* It is likewise added, that when Pyrrhus invited him to come and settle in his court, where he promised to raise him to the highest honours, *I would by no means recommend it to you,* replied he; *for when your subjects know me, they will prefer me for their king.*

Cyneas sent to negotiate at Rome.

Pyrrhus was desirous of concluding a peace with a people whom he found it so difficult to overcome, and therefore ordered Cyneas, to follow the Roman ambassadors, in order to negotiate the terms. This able minister very soon learnt

to respect the Romans: neither man nor woman would accept of the presents which he offered them, in the name of his master. After a long deliberation, the senate, excited by the old Appius, made the following memorable answer, in which the steady character of the republic is strongly imprinted: 'Let Pyrrhus leave Italy, and then send to demand a peace; but while he remains in the country, Rome will prosecute the war.' Cyneas was ordered to leave the city that very day; and in giving an account of his embassy to the king, said, that *Rome appeared to him like a temple, and the senate an assembly of kings.*

Treachery of the Physician of Pyrrhus.

It is said, that the physician of Pyrrhus, some time after this, made an offer to the Romans to poison the king for a sum of money. It is not easy to give credit to this, for what better fortune could he hope from Rome than from a court? Fabricius, the consul, generously acquainted the king with the offer of his physician, and on his part, according to Eutropius, deserved the following encomium: *It were a more easy task to turn the sun out of his course, than to turn Fabricius from the paths of justice and probity.* It is with pleasure that I mention these anecdotes, as important lessons of virtue; that manly virtue, which knows how to despise that which corrupted souls adore. The critic may suspect some of them to be fictitious, but they perfectly correspond with the character of the most illustrious Romans, who certainly possessed that greatness of mind, which laid those voluptuous enemies at their feet, who were accustomed to wealth and luxury.

Year of Rome, 478. Pyrrhus defeated at Beneventum.

Pyrrhus, tired of a war which brought no advantage, laid hold of a pretence for withdrawing from Italy, and passed over to Sicily, where the Syracusans implored his assistance against the Carthaginians. He succeeded there at first; but afterwards, having lost all hope, he returned to Italy, and, near Beneventum, attacked Curius Dentatus, who gained a victory, and put him to flight. The Romans were no longer dismayed at the sight of his elephants; but by throwing a sort of flaming darts, and piercing them with pikes, made them quite furious; and, as was frequently the case, this rage was turned against their conductors.

The art of encamping.

The camp of Pyrrhus, in which the situation of every corps of his army was fixed within one enclosure, instructed the conquerors in the art of encamping. The Romans, always attentive to imitate whatever they found excellent in the practice of other nations, added courage and discipline to amazing resources of natural genius. It is by imitation that good inventions are improved, and new ones afterwards contrived.

Pyrrhus quits Italy.

Six years after the beginning of the war, Pyrrhus quitted Italy. He set out with a design of taking Macedonia from Antigonus Gonatas; carried the war even into Peloponnesus, and was killed at the siege of Argos. Bold and enterprising, but rash and inconsiderate; he was only an illustrious adventurer, who could not possibly succeed against the unshaken constancy of the Romans. The cities of Tarentum, Crotona, Locri, all Græcia Magna, all Italy properly so called, fell very soon under the Roman government, at least as allies, who were considered as too weak to obstruct

the intentions of the republic. They were principally indebted to the severity of their discipline for their success, of which we shall see a new and very remarkable example.

The garrison of Rhegium punished.

Rhegium, a Grecian colony, situated in the most southern extremity of Italy, had put itself under the protection of Rome, and admitted a garrison of four thousand men. The soldiers very soon adopted the manners of the country, gave themselves up to every gratification, and their relish for pleasure brought them at last to be guilty of a most enormous wickedness; by forming a detestable conspiracy, murdering the inhabitants, and taking possession of their property. The war with Pyrrhus delayed the punishment of this enormity; but when it was finished, one of the consuls was sent to inflict the punishment due to such a dreadful offence. He besieged the rebels in Rhegium, and obliged them to surrender, after a most violent resistance, in which the greatest part of them sought a voluntary death. There were only three hundred taken prisoners, who were all condemned by the senate and executed, notwithstanding the opposition of one of the tribunes. Without such examples to preserve subordination, the Romans would have become mere banditti.

Rigour of the censorship.

The severity of the censors contributed equally to preserve the manners of the people, upon which the Roman greatness essentially depended. Cornelius Rufinus was excluded from the senate by the censors, for having more than fifteen marks * of silver-plate in his possession.

* The mark is eight ounces.

He had been twice consul, and once dictator. Though he was reputed to be both unjust and avaricious, it was by means of Fabricius that he obtained the consulship. *I would rather*, said that great man, *be pillaged by a consul, than led prisoner by an enemy.* It would seem that, among the candidates that year, there was not one to be found who was a good general and an honest man.

Poverty of Curius.

Can it be believed, that, about this time, the incorruptible Curius was accused of having converted some of the plunder taken in war to his own use? For his vindication, he produced a wooden vessel, which he used at sacrifices, and swore that it was the only plunder that he had ever admitted into his house. The senate having made him an offer of fifty jugera of the conquered lands, after the defeat of Pyrrhus, he replied that he lived very well upon seven, and would never consent to set a bad example.

Disinterestedness of the ambassadors sent into Egypt.

Such a noble instance of disinterested conduct excited emulation in the republic. The Roman ambassadors, who were sent into Egypt, to form a treaty of alliance with Ptolemy Philadelphus, deposited the rich presents, which they had been forced to accept from that prince, in the public treasury at their return, and received the thanks of the senate, for having conducted themselves so as to render the Roman manners respectable in the eyes of foreign nations. It is true, that riches were not much known, since there was no silver money coined at Rome, till after the retreat of Pyrrhus; but it has been seen that gold and silver are not the sole food of avarice.

First silver money.

CHAPTER II.

INTRODUCTION TO THE PUNIC WARS. REPUBLIC OF CARTHAGE. REVOLUTIONS OF SICILY.

We are now about to see a much greater theatre open, for the display of the power and policy of Rome. But before we enter upon the subject of the Punic wars, it is necessary to be first acquainted with Carthage, that famous rival of Rome, so powerful from her wealth and commerce, but already arrived at that fatal period, when the greatest powers have been ruined by excessive ambition.

Government of Carthage.

Carthage, founded by the Tyrians about seventy years before Rome, had a mixed government, which undoubtedly was entitled to the highest encomiums, since it enjoyed domestic peace and civil liberty for more than five hundred years. They had two magistrates chosen annually, who were called *suffetes*, resembling the Spartan kings or Roman consuls. The most important business of the state was determined by the senate, if they were unanimous; but if they were not, it was referred to the people. They had a tribunal of a hundred and four senators, to whom the generals of the army were obliged to be responsible; a too severe tribunal, since they even punished the want of success with death, as if the best generals could command fortune. Five of these judges formed a superior council, like the Spartan Ephori, whose business it was to appoint

successors to the vacant seats in the great tribunal.

Two faults in that government criticised by Aristotle.

Aristotle takes notice of two great faults in their distribution of employments: one was, that the same person might hold several employments, which could be rarely consistent with the good of the public; the second, that the poor were debarred from the highest offices, which gave too much importance to riches, and left too little room for emulation. However, it must be confessed, that unless the poor were like Aristides or Fabricius, it might be more dangerous to trust offices in their hands, than in the hands of people, who had less temptation to enrich themselves. Besides, few people in a commercial country are well educated without a fortune. The misfortune of Carthage was, that wealth had introduced corruption, and stimulated avarice, so that every thing was sold, though in fact nothing properly was venal; and then, according to the observation of the philosopher, the magistrates made no scruple of recovering what they had advanced, either at the expense of the state, or of individuals.

Vices of the Carthaginians.

Immersed in commercial pursuits, and contemning all arts and sciences which did not lead to the improvement of their fortunes, the Carthaginians were knavish, vicious, and cruel, and superstition contributed to render their manners atrocious. They offered human victims to Saturn; even their own children, while the mothers, stifling the calls of nature, could with tearless eyes witness these horrid sacrifices. It was the reflecting upon such dreadful deeds, thatmade Plutarch think superstition more of-

fensive to the Deity than atheism. Gelon, king of Syracuse, having defeated the Carthaginians in the time of Xerxes, imposed upon them, as a condition for granting them a peace, that they should abolish human sacrifices; but this salutary law was no longer observed, than while they dared not infringe it without danger. The southsayers were consulted in every affair of consequence, and all their errors were rendered sacred by credulity.

Temperance inculcated.

It seems that the Carthaginians reckoned temperance a virtue, or at least it was required from those in whom intemperance is commonly of the most fatal consequence. The magistrates abstained from wine while they were in office, and the army were prohibited from drinking it while they remained in the field. Though they were not a warlike nation, and employed mercenaries to save the blood, and preserve the commerce of their citizens, yet they had a custom very well calculated to excite military ardour. The soldiers wore as many rings as they had served campaigns, and these rings were looked upon as honourable badges of distinction. Honour is the spur of war.

Power and commerce of Carthage.

Carthage, always united to Tyre its mother country, was imperceptibly raised even above that famous city, by commerce and new colonies. She had subjected Sardinia, a great part of Sicily and Spain. Being mistress of the sea, she every where collected the superfluities of different countries at small expense, to sell them at a high price elsewhere. Having no rivals, she easily imposed this kind of tax on other nations.

Voyage of Hanno.

Hanno, a Carthaginian navigator, was com-

manded to make the tour of Africa by the straits of Gibraltar, as the Phenicians did in the time of Nechos, and would have performed one of the greatest enterprises which had been conceived by the Ancients, if he had not fallen short of provisions; but Carthage, by extending her empire, was hastening to destruction; for the love of conquest, which is dangerous to all people, is incompatible with commercial government and interests.

Ancient treaties between Carthage and Rome.

Carthage and Rome had entered into several treaties of alliance; the first under the consulship of Brutus, by which certain limits were fixed for the Roman navigation, and the Carthaginians engaged to do no injury in Latium. This treaty, which has been handed down entire by Polybius, shows that there was a mutual distrust subsisting at that time between the two nations. By a second treaty made in the year four hundred and five of Rome, and three hundred and forty-eight before the Christian era, it was agreed, among other articles, that the Romans should not be at liberty to trade in Sardinia or Africa, except at Carthage, where they might dispose of all kinds of merchandise which were not prohibited; and the Carthaginians might have the same privilege at Rome; which conventions were renewed at different times with some alterations. They supposed, that the Carthaginians were the most powerful, but that the Romans had sufficient strength to make themselves dreaded. Both nations were desirous to make a conquest of Sicily, and the flame of war was very soon kindled by ambition. But before we begin to give an account of its progress, we must notice the revolutions of Sicily.

Sixty years after the Syracusans had shaken off the yoke of the family of Gelon, eleven after they had driven out the Athenians, and four hundred and five before our era, Dionysius the tyrant made himself master of their city; and by his abilities, victories, and cruelties, established his power in that island. He had conquered the Carthaginians, and driven them almost entirely out of Sicily. To the ridiculous vanity of being reckoned a poet, a passion for gaining crowns at the Olympic games, a rigorous severity against the friends of truth, a suspicious and merciless tyranny, and a shameful contempt of religion, were added a strength of genius and courage, which supported him thirty-eight years upon the throne, though surrounded by crowds of domestic enemies. Dionysius the tyrant.

Among many anecdotes which are related of Dionysius the tyrant, the following seem to me to be the most remarkable. He had sent Philoxenus the philosopher to the Quarry, the name of a prison, because he presumed not to admire some verses of which the tyrant was vain; and having ordered him back next day, asked his sentiments of a new piece; upon which Philoxenus, turning round to the guards, *Carry me back to the quarry*, said he; but upon this occasion the tyrant understood raillery. Being in want of money, he plundered the temple of Jupiter, carrying off a cloak of massy gold, with which the God was decorated, saying, *This cloak is too heavy in summer, and too cold in winter;* and caused one of woollen to be put upon the statue, as suitable for every season. This wretched prince would have no barber but his own daughters; and, even dreading Anecdotes of that tyrant.

the razor or scissors in their hands, taught them to singe off the hair with nut-shells. Dionysius the younger, his son, succeeded him without any obstruction.

Dionysius the younger expelled by Dion.

This voluptuous and effeminate prince gave himself up at first to the seductions of prosperity, and seemed to reign for no other purpose but to continue intoxicated with pleasures; but his brother-in-law Dion, the wisest of all the inhabitants of Syracuse, having persuaded him to prevail with the famous Plato to come to his court, study, philosophy and morals, came in the train of the philosopher. If the courtiers could have been brought to relish the reformation, Syracuse would have had an excellent prince; but they formed false accusations against Dion, and caused him to be banished. Plato immediately followed him. *You are going to rail against me with your philosophers*, said the prince, when he gave him leave to depart. *God forbid*, replied he, *that the academy should be in such want of subjects, as to oblige us to think of you!* The most horrid injustice very soon completed the disgrace of Dion, his property was sold, and his wife given to another. The kingdom of Sicily, aggrieved by the same oppressions, solicited his help against the tyrant; and, notwithstanding the advice of Plato, who disapproved the attempt, he resolved, by a remarkable revolution, to revenge the injuries done to his country and himself. In fact, he delivered Syracuse from tyranny, and governed for some time with the greatest prudence; but an ungrateful people, hurt by the austerity of his manners, suddenly forgot all his services. He was assassinated by a treach-

erous friend, and Dionysius remounted the throne, ten years after he had been expelled. The Corinthians having sent the famous Timoleon to the assistance of Syracuse, which was one of their colonies, Dionysius was again dethroned, and, being banished to Corinth, there ended his days in poverty. The Spartans thought to terrify Philip from his example, by replying to a threatening letter which he sent them, with these words, *Dionysius at Corinth.*

Restored, and again dethroned by Timoleon.

Sicily did not long enjoy the peace and liberty to which they were restored by Timoleon. Agathocles, a cotemporary of Alexander, made himself master of Syracuse by the help of the Carthaginians, with whom he afterwards quarrelled. Besieged in Syracuse, he ventured to carry the war into Africa; defeated the Carthaginians, suffered a reverse of fortune, basely abandoned his army, and died by poison.

Agathocles another tyrant of Syracuse.

Syracuse, besieged anew by the Carthaginians, applied for assistance to Pyrrhus, at that time in Italy. That prince was at first successful in fighting for her, but afterwards unfortunate. He exclaimed, on quitting Sicily, *What a charming field of battle do we leave for the Romans and Carthaginians!* The Syracusans chose Hiero for their king. Then it was that the Punic wars began, which sprung from the ambitious policy of Rome, much more than from either justice or necessity.

Hiero chosen king.

CHAPTER III.

THE FIRST PUNIC WAR, AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

Year of Rome, 489. The Romans carry war into Sicily.

THE Mamertines, who were originally Campanian mercenaries, by a deed similar to that of the Roman garrison at Rhegium, which was severely punished, as we have already mentioned, took possession of Messina. They were attacked by Hiero, and assisted by Carthage; but being equally afraid of the attempts of the Carthaginians and the king of Syracuse, put themselves under the protection of the Romans. Honour forbid the senate to declare in their favour; but the people, who were not so delicate in their ideas of decorum, were desirous of a war from which they promised singular advantage to themselves. The will of the people being the supreme law, they immediately took up arms. Appius Claudius, the consul, with a small fleet passed the straits; defeated Hiero and the Carthaginians, who had united against him; left a garrison at Messina, and returned to Rome with the greater glory, as it was the first time the Romans had carried their arms beyond the Continent.

Enter into an alliance with Hiero.

Either from prudence, or being unable to resist, Hiero entered into a treaty with the Romans to save his own kingdom. The Carthaginians were in possession of a great part of the coast and the maritime towns; but they could be driven from thence with the assistance of the Syracusans.

The famous city of Agrigentum was taken after a long siege, and the enemy defeated in a severe engagement. The Romans, encouraged by these successes, enlarged their views. They found the necessity of having a naval power, and undertook to form one; for, before this time, they never had a fleet deserving the name, their vessels being rather small barks than ships. A Carthaginian galley, which was stranded on the coast of Italy, served them for a model, and they laboured with such zeal, that, in two months time, according to Polybius, they equiped a hundred galleys of five banks of oars, and twenty of three banks. The rowers were in the mean time exercised upon the sea-shore, sitting upon benches, as if they had been on board a galley. However, it was not to be expected that their galleys, and their manner of working them, could, upon a first attempt, equal those of a people who were masters of the sea. To acquire a superiority, it was necessary to find a method of fighting with firm footing on board their ships, so as to render the address and maritime skill of the Carthaginians of no avail. What is it of which genius is incapable, when roused by great motives?

Year of Rome, 498. Raise a formidable fleet.

The consul Duilius had a machine added to every galley called *corvus*, which, falling upon the ship of the enemy, served equally to grapple and as a bridge for boarding. The invention was crowned with every possible success; for he defeated the Carthaginians, killed seven thousand men, made as many prisoners, took fourscore, and sunk thirteen of their galleys. Never had a victory been gained so pleasing to

Naval victory by the consul Duilius.

the Romans; and, during the whole of his life, Duilius was treated with an extraordinary mark of respect. At his return from supper in the city, he was always preceded by a man carrying a torch, and another playing on an instrument of music.

New successes.

For a few years, victories and instances of heroic valour succeeded almost without interruption. They took Corsica and Sardinia from the enemy. Calphurnius, a legionary tribune, saved the army in Sicily by an action similar to that of Leonidas against the Persians. His three hundred companions fell in the action; he alone escaped, all covered with wounds, and his reward was a crown of grass. The Romans, having taken sixty galleys at the battle of Ecnomus, thought themselves in a situation to attack Africa.

Regulus enters Africa.

Regulus, one of the victorious consuls, carried the war into that country, and, at the expiration of his consulship, received orders to remain in quality of proconsul. He then complained and demanded a successor, because, he said, that a thief had stolen away his labouring utensils; and if he did not return to cultivate his little field, he and his family run a risk of perishing with hunger. The senate gave orders that the field of Regulus should be cultivated, and his family supported at the public expense. The Roman people, said Seneca, became his labourer. Thus, we see, that poverty still continued to heighten the glory of the Roman generals; but we cannot easily be persuaded that Regulus had not some secret motive for desiring to be recalled. The bare mention of his wants would undoubtedly have obtained the same assistance; but, perhaps, he

longed for a triumph, of which he might be disappointed by a reverse of fortune. What followed gives authority to this conjecture.

Year of Rome, 497. Regulus vanquished by Xanthippus.

Regulus, advancing to the gates of Carthage, and, anxious to put an end to the war, offered such hard terms to the enemy, that, notwithstanding the general consternation, they were rejected. By his saying, *That they must either learn to conquer, or to submit to the conqueror*, he animated the courage of the drooping Carthaginians, from a sense of shame and despair. Some Grecian auxiliaries, in Carthaginian pay, arrived in this critical situation of their affairs. Xanthippus, a Lacedemonian, taught them the art of war, accustomed them to submit to discipline, and filled their minds with zeal and confidence. He attacked the presumptuous Regulus, who, imagining himself invincible, took no precautions to defeat his enemy, and was therefore conquered, and taken prisoner; an example, says Polybius, very proper to teach us to be less confident, and more prudent. Let us learn by the errors and misfortunes of others, to avoid the like errors and misfortunes. This is the valuable advantage to be gained by reading. Xanthippus saved the Carthaginians, but, dreading their jealousy, privately withdrew.

The Romans continue the war with zeal.

The success which the Romans had at the beginning of this war could not be effaced, and made them redouble their efforts in fitting out a new fleet to pursue it with fresh vigour. But this armament was destroyed by storms and shipwrecks, which made them renounce all hopes of becoming masters of the sea. However, when they came to consider the great superiority which the enemy derived from their

naval force, they hastened to get ready a new fleet. Before it was prepared to put to sea, Metellus the proconsul gained a complete victory near Panormus, Palermo. Sixscore elephants served to grace his triumph, which afforded a new spectacle to the Romans.

Heroic death of Regulus.

At last the fleet set sail, to lay siege to Lilybæum, the strongest place possessed by the Carthaginians in Sicily. It was upon this occasion that the Carthaginians sent ambassadors to propose an exchange of prisoners. If, notwithstanding the silence of Polybius, we may credit a number of historians, Regulus, who was sent with these ambassadors, persuaded the Romans not to make the exchange, and then returned to Carthage to suffer a most dreadful punishment. To revenge his death, the Romans gave up the chief prisoners to his wife and children, who showed they were as great barbarians as the Carthaginians. It is certain, that even their virtue had a mixture of savage cruelty.

Year of Rome, 504. Battle of Drepanum.

During the nine years during which the siege of Lilybæum lasted, both nations displayed every resource which they could command. Claudius Pulcher, a haughty imprudent consul, attacked the Carthaginian fleet near the port of Drepanum, and lost his own, which was destroyed by Adherbal. It is reported that, upon being informed before the engagement that the sacred pullets would not eat, he caused them to be thrown into the sea, saying, with a sneer, *Since they will not eat, let them drink.* This was sufficient among such superstitious people to dishearten the soldiers. Storms and shipwrecks, and other misfortunes, totally destroyed the Roman fleet, except some ships fitted out by

private persons at their own expense to cruize against the enemy. At last the zeal of the people supplied the want of public money,* every one contributing in proportion to his ability to fit out a new armament; the republic, whose promises did not deceive them, having engaged that their money should be refunded. Two hundred galleys, of five banks of oars, were soon fitted out; and Lutatius, the consul, destroyed the fleet under Hanno, defeated Hamilcar Barcas, the father of the famous Hannibal; compelled the Carthaginians to sue for a peace, and most imperiously dictated the conditions.

Year of Rome, 511. Treaty of peace.

It was stipulated that the Carthaginians should totally evacuate Sicily; that in the space of twenty years they should pay two thousand two hundred talents of silver, about L.325,480 English, to the Romans; that they should restore the prisoners and deserters without ransom; and, lastly, should not make war against Hiero or his allies. The Roman people refused to ratify the treaty, but upon condition that they should have an additional thousand talents for the expenses of the war; the time of payment of the other sums be reduced to ten years, and the Carthaginians obliged to yield up all the islands lying between Italy and Sicily. Except the kingdom of Syracuse, Sicily was declared a Roman *province;* which was a name they gave to all their conquests out of Italy. A prætor and quæstor were sent thither regu-

* At the beginning of the siege of Lilybæum, money was so scarce that at Rome the bushel of corn cost but one *as*, or the tenth part of a drachma. For the same price they had a *congius* of wine about one gallon, twelve pounds of meat, ten pounds of olive-oil, &c.—*Plin.* l. xvii. c. 3.

larly every year; the first to be a judge in civil matters, the other to gather the taxes.

Causes of the superiority of the Romans.

Thus we see the Romans, after a continual war of twenty-four years, without wealth, ignorant of the art of navigation, sustaining a loss of seven hundred galleys, and yet prescribing terms to the opulent city of Carthage, whose losses were less considerable, with *infinitely* greater resources. An inflexible steadiness in all her resolutions; an invincible love of glory and desire of conquest; the constant practice of fighting, and the most rigid discipline; all together contributed to determine every contest in favour of Rome. A people devoted entirely to war, ought certainly to succeed against a nation which never enters into it but for the sake of her commerce.

Severe discipline inspires courage.

Besides, the Carthaginians, by crucifying such of their generals as happened to be unfortunate in war, inspired terror rather than emulation; whereas the Romans inspired their people with courage, by punishing disobedience and cowardice, and every failure in duty, with degradation, and by disdaining to ransom their prisoners, without reckoning as crimes, those misfortunes to which every man is subject. Four hundred young knights having been ordered upon some pressing and indispensable service, refused to obey. By the judgment of the censors they were therefore deprived of their horses; but they were not lost to the state; they could still wipe out the stain, and recover their rank. A salutary punishment served only to revive the sense they ought to have of their duty. In one word, Rome had a great deal of ambition, and excellent soldiers to execute her ambitious pur-

poses. She aimed unremittingly at the great object of her politics, which was to aggrandize herself; and her consuls were the more zealous to distinguish themselves, as they continued but a short time in office. It was by these means that Rome became the mistress of the world. The number of citizens was much diminished at the end of the first Punic war.

Year of Rome, 514. Revolt in Sardinia.

The army of Carthage was composed of African mercenaries, who, far from serving with that zeal which love of country inspires, were more inclined to revolt, that they might gain advantage for themselves. The Carthaginians wanted to send them home, and to reduce their pay, which proved the signal for a dreadful sedition. The city would have been taken and plundered, if it had not been for Hamilcar. The mercenaries seized Sardinia, and made an offer of it to the Romans, by whom it was rejected; but they afterwards found a pretence to take possession of it, because they found it convenient for their purpose. They compelled the Carthaginians to renounce it, and to pay the expense of the armament which was fitted out for taking it. As the Carthaginians could not revenge the insult, they were obliged to comply.

The temple of Janus shut.

A general peace occasioned the temple of Janus to be shut, which had been kept constantly open from the time of Numa. In a few months it was again opened, and never more shut till in the time of Augustus. War was the element of the Romans; yet most authors extol their justice and humanity.

Year of Rome, 523. Illyrian corsairs.

Ambassadors were sent into Illyria, to demand reparation of certain injuries done by the

corsairs of that nation to some merchants. Teuta, their queen, replied, that she would give no orders for attacking the Romans, but that the kings of the country were not accustomed to prohibit individuals from cruizing. To which the youngest of the ambassadors boldly replied, *With us, the injury done to one citizen is revenged by the republic, and we shall oblige you to reform your customs.* Teuta, provoked at this affront, caused the ambassadors to be put to death. The Romans subdued Illyria, and took this opportunity of showing themselves to the Greeks. Corinth and Athens, not foreseeing that they would one day become the slaves of this people, hitherto unknown, admitted them to their games and mysteries.

War against the Gauls of Italy.

The Gauls were making preparations in the mean time against Rome, who had provoked them by distributing the lands of the Senones. The pontiffs were consulted about the means of warding off the storm, and, in consequence of their reply, two Gauls were buried alive. Barbarous superstition seems every where to have caused murder to have been committed in honour of the Deity, who forbids and punishes it. This barbarity enraged the Gauls, and they overcame a considerable army in Tuscany, but, fighting half naked, they were defeated in several engagements. The Romans passed the Po for the first time in five hundred and thirty. They took Milan, the capital of Insubria; made themselves masters of Liguria; and united these two countries into one province by the name of Cisalpine Gaul. One colony was established at Cremona, another at Placentia. Istria and Illyria were next subdued.

I only point out those events. The second Punic war presents us with some more memorable transactions.

CHAPTER IV.

SECOND PUNIC WAR. THE BATTLE OF CANNÆ.

Progress of the Carthaginians in Spain.

THE Carthaginians very soon repaired their losses by new conquests gained in Spain, into which Hamilcar had carried the war, after having made his son Hannibal swear irreconcilable hatred against the Romans. In the course of nine years he had greatly extended the dominions of Carthage in that country, from whence they received immense riches; and was succeeded in the command by his son-in-law Asdrubal, who followed his steps, founded the city of Carthagena, and greatly added to a power whose progress could not fail to give uneasiness to the Romans. Rome, seeing herself threatened by the Gauls, sent to negociate with her dangerous rival, who was very unwilling to renew the war. It was agreed, that the Carthaginians should not pass the Iberus, Ebro; and that Saguntum, a considerable city in alliance with the Romans, should remain free and independent.

Hannibal commands in Spain.

It was impossible that peace could long subsist between two such ambitious powers with such opposite interests. Asdrubal was naturally of a pacific disposition, and faithfully observed the treaty; but, at his request, young Hannibal was sent to him into Spain. He died, and Hannibal, the implacable enemy of Rome

whose greatest passion was for war, being appointed his successor, very soon dedicated his whole attention to accomplish the vast projects of his uncommon genius, and gave full scope to his natural disposition. About twenty-six years of age, he already added prudence to the most heroic qualities. He was adored by his soldiers, because he was at once their most perfect model and greatest benefactor. He was sober, vigilant, indefatigable, inured to every kind of toil, never dedicating any time for sleep but what was absolutely necessary to recover him from the fatigue of business, sleeping sometimes upon the ground amidst the common sentinels; liberally rewarding those actions and military virtues in others, which were his own particular delight, and, unfortunately for the Romans, possessing the talents of an artful politician in as eminent a degree as those of an accomplished general.

Year of Rome, 534. He takes Saguntum.

Though the Barcan party, of whom his father was the chief, ruled in Carthage, and had already declared in favour of a war, yet as their opponents might one day prevail, Hannibal would not undertake any thing without the consent of the republic. By employing his emissaries to complain of the Saguntines, and to render the Romans odious and suspected, he obtained full power to act with respect to Saguntum, as he should judge most proper for the interest of Carthage. That city being invested, applied to the Romans for assistance, who sent ambassadors; but their remonstrances were of no avail. After a siege of seven months, the Saguntines being reduced to the last extremity, burnt all their valuable effects, and,

setting fire to their houses, most of them perished in the flames with their wives and children, and the rest were put to the sword.

Rome declares war against Carthage.

Rome keenly reproached herself for neglecting to succour such useful and faithful allies, and, preparing for war, sent a new embassy to ask the reason of an enterprise contrary to treaties and the law of nations. Far from delivering up Hannibal as the Romans required, the Carthaginians pretended to justify the siege of Saguntum from their example. Fabius, who was chief of the embassy, not caring to enter into superfluous discussions, making a fold in his robe, *I here carry peace or war*, said he, haughtily, *chuse one or the other*. The chief of the senate declared, in a tone equally haughty, that he himself might chuse. *I chuse war then*, replied Fabius; which, being agreeable to the Barcan party, was cheerfully accepted.

Motives of the second Punic war.

It is a great political question, whether or not this war was just. The last treaty expressly bore, that the Carthaginians should not attack Saguntum, and in this point the convention was violated; but the invasion of Sardinia and Corsica by the Romans, and their imposing a new tribute upon Carthage after the conclusion of the treaty of peace, were attempts equally odious. As the Carthaginians had given no proof of compliance in the treaty made with Asdrubal, but by a silence of several years, they were not without a pretence to elude the observation of it. On both sides we shall find injustice, violence, bitterness, and an ambitious jealousy, watching for favourable opportunities. The voice of equity, and the laws of good faith, have little power when the passions bear sway;

and the war, in appearance the most just, is almost always blameable in its principles. Rome seemed to have a right to avenge the cause of Saguntum; but Rome wanted to humble and strip Carthage.

Politics too little influenced by morals.

We have reason to bewail the fate of the human race, when the political transactions between nations are not guided by morality; then indeed, treaties are but weak ties; then the different states, always upon the watch, and in continual distrust of one another, under an appearance of friendship, are certain enemies. And as the first law of nature obliges us to watch for our own preservation, it frequently happens, that the horrors of war may be justified, by the necessity of preventing certain attacks, as the only means for self-defence.

Rome in vain solicits the Spainards and Gauls to assist her.

The Roman ambassadors, who endeavoured to enter into treaties of alliance in Spain and with the Gauls, found these people strongly prepossessed against the republic. They were told in Spain, that the destruction of Saguntum was no motive for chusing such allies. The Gauls thought it ridiculous that, after the treatment given to their countrymen, the Romans should make them a proposal for an offensive alliance: the republic therefore found that they must depend upon their own strength, which was certainly very considerable. Beside six legions, which amounted to twenty-four thousand infantry and eighteen hundred horse, they had a body of forty-eight thousand men from the other Italian states, and a fleet of two hundred and forty sail. The two consuls drew lots for the different departments; Sempronius set out for Africa, and Publius Scipio to fight in Spain.

In the mean time, Hannibal having the command of the Carthaginian forces, with a power of doing whatever he judged proper, and not restricted to time like the consuls, prepared to carry the war into Italy. No undertaking was ever concerted with more courage, or more prudence. He took the most proper measures for the safety of the state; procured perfect information of the obstructions he was to expect on his way; by kindness and presents, gained over a number of Gauls to espouse his interest, and perfectly won the hearts of all his soldiers. As he had foreseen every thing, no dangers could dismay him, and though he was to meet with some very terrible, yet, being satisfied that he could overcome them, he set out with all the confidence of a true hero.

Hannibal prepares to carry the war into Italy.

The passage of the river Iberus, and the Pyrenean mountains, with which he gloriously commenced, is nothing in comparison of the Rhone and the Alps. On the news of his march, Scipio repaired with all diligence to the neighbourhood of Marseilles, with an intention of making Gaul the theatre of action; but being deceived by the alacrity of the enemy, he neither could meet him, nor prevent his passing the Rhone. Neither the rapidity of the river, nor the Gauls who defended the opposite bank, could retard the progress of Hannibal: he even saved his elephants. Having arrived at the foot of the Alps in the month of October, he found them covered with ice and snow, and guarded by savage mountaineers, who might destroy his army, by tumbling down masses of rock upon them from the summits of the mountains. However, with infinite labour, he sur-

Year of Rome, 535. He passes the Alps.

mounted every obstacle, and in fifteen days arrived at that delightful country, which he proposed to his troops as the reward of all their labours. He had been about five months and a half upon his march from Carthagena, from whence he set out at the head of fifteen thousand infantry, and twenty thousand horse, of whom there remained only twenty thousand foot, and two thousand horse when he arrived in Italy.

One of the most remarkable expeditions in history.

This march, of about four hundred leagues, which was accomplished, notwithstanding innumerable obstructions, deserves to be celebrated among the extraordinary exploits of the most famous conquerors. The history of it, which has been left us by Polybius, is excellent, though there is not to be found in it either the marvellous, or the pomp of that author. The vinegar with which that author makes them dissolve the rocks of the Alps, too much resembles the chimeras of Herodotus. Where could such a quantity of vinegar be found?

Hannibal's first exploits in Italy.

As soon as Hannibal had given his army some time to repose, he was impatient to signalise himself by some enterprises, which might spread the terror of his name and arms. He began by taking Turin, and Scipio quickly advanced for the protection of Italy. The consul engaged the Carthaginians beyond the Ticinus, now called the Tesino; but receiving a wound, and his cavalry, on a supposition that he was killed, immediately flying from the field, he repassed the Po closely followed by Hannibal, upon which the Gauls abandoned the Romans and joined the enemy.

Battle of Trebia.

Sempronius, a vain presumptuous man, be-

ing recalled from Sicily, flattered himself with the hopes of conquering the enemy without the assistance of his colleague, who was still confined by his wound; and, notwithstanding the remonstrances of Scipio, persisted in his resolution to engage. As he did not study the proper season, but the time which suited his own views, an excellent observation of Polybius, he took his measures so badly, that the two consular armies were defeated on the banks of the Trebia. By a stratagem of Hannibal in the beginning of the engagement, the consul passed the river, notwithstanding the snow which fell, so that his soldiers, stiff with cold, and suffering with hunger, could scarce hold their arms, while the Carthaginians were provided against fatigue and the severity of the weather. At sight of such an error, it was easy to foresee the consequence.

Dangerous march of Hannibal into Tuscany.

The conqueror, in the next place, attempted to pass the Appenines, which, from some circumstances, were almost as dangerous as the Alps. His army suffered severely by a terrible storm of two days continuance, in all which time they could not pitch their tents. Seven elephants, with a number of men and horses, perished upon the occasion. Yet, on getting out of the mountains, Hannibal again attacked the consul Sempronius, and, after a severe action, in which neither army gained the advantage, he hastened to penetrate by the shortest road into Tuscany. Deep marshes presented themselves before him; a new danger, which, to any man but Hannibal, would have been insurmountable. His soldiers stood in water four days and four nights. Mounted upon the only

elephant which remained, he could scarce extricate himself out of the fens, and lost an eye by a defluxion which was occasioned by the bad air and fatigue. How highly deserving of admiration these prodigies of courage, if the cause of humanity had been their object!

Year of Rome, 536. The Romans defeated at Thrasymenus.

A new consul, the rash Flaminius, a man unworthy of the command, was, by his indiscretion, destined to complete the glory of Hannibal. He alarmed the Roman superstition, by showing an arrogant contempt of the auspices; in the next place, being impatient to fight, he engaged in a defile near the lake Thrasymenus, where he was invested by the enemy, who killed him, and cut his army in pieces. Only six thousand Romans escaped from the slaughter, but were next day compelled to surrender; and four thousand men, who were on the way to join Flaminus, were likewise defeated. Hannibal seemed to command fortune.

Prudent policy of the conquerer.

Amidst all his success, he never forgot the part of a sound politician, and behaved with great humanity to the allies of Rome, whom he hoped to allure to his interest by dismissing their prisoners without ransom. He set himself up as the deliverer of these people who had been stript of their rights by ambition and injustice: but, except from the Gauls, he met with no assistance.

Fabius chosen dictator.

All would have been ruined, if the senate, contrary to rule, had not themselves chosen a dictator who was able to restore their affairs; I mean Fabius, who, by his prudence, excelled the most famous conquerors. Minucius was chosen general of the horse by the people; a sad choice, which helped to set off the merit of

the dictator to greater advantage. Fabius began his dictatorship by some religious acts, which were become the more necessary, as the minds of the people had been struck with a superstitious panic. He made them fulfil an old vow, long in disuse, to which they supposed success in war was attached; and then, putting himself at the head of his army, prudently determined to let the enemy consume themselves for want of provisions. He encamped upon heights, avoided coming to an engagement, harrassed Hannibal, and, by this new kind of war, disconcerted all his measures. Minucius, who was as impetuous as Fabius was prudent, at sight of the Carthaginians laying waste the territories of the allies, railed against his conduct; but Fabius was not to be moved by reproaches. The cruel, and almost unanimous accusation of cowardice, could not tarnish the reputation of the dictator, who had sufficient steadiness to set at defiance the expressions of contempt and ridicule which were levelled at him, and even to sacrifice his own glory to the good of his country; esteeming the opinion of the world as nothing when compared with the sense which he had of his duty. *I should be cowardly indeed*, said he, *if the fear of raillery made me commit a fault.*

Fabius saves the rash Minucius.

At last Fabius was accused of keeping up a secret correspondence with the enemy, because Hannibal, on purpose to render him suspected, had spared his lands. Fabius therefore ordered his son to sell the lands, and to employ the money in ransoming the prisoners. He was ordered to Rome; and when one of the tribunes of the people railed against him, he only replied,

Fabius cannot be suspected by his fellow-citizens. Injustice was carried so far, that his general of horse was appointed to an equal share in the command; he therefore gave to that rash man one half of his army. He very soon saw him engaged with the Carthaginians, and surrounded on all sides, upon the point of being totally defeated. Fabius then rushed upon the enemy, and dispersed them. He could be no Roman who could withstand such proofs of worth. Minucius blushed at his error, and yielded the command entirely to the dictator. This campaign affords one of the most instructive lessons which history can possibly present, either to the citizen or soldier.

CHAPTER V.

BATTLE OF CANNÆ AND CONTINUATION OF THE WAR, TILL SCIPIO AFRICANUS WAS APPOINTED TO THE COMMAND IN SPAIN.

Varro and Emilius consuls.

EXPERIENCE had shown the Romans how much their success in war depended upon the choice of a general; but the people rarely profit by experience; they are hurried on by prejudice, and blinded by cabals. Terentius Varro, the son of a butcher, who likewise had exercised the same employment, and raised himself by flattering the populace without any merit but arrogant presumption, was chosen consul in spite of the nobility. Emilius his colleague, with all the virtues of a good citizen, and the

abilities of an excellent general, found him an adversary more to be dreaded than the Carthaginians. Eight legions, consisting each of five thousand foot and three hundred horse, with the troops furnished by the allies considerably augmented, composed a very formidable army under the two consuls. If commanded by Emilius only, it had been invincible; but by the rashness of Varro, it was totally destroyed at the famous battle of Cannæ in Apulia.*

Year of Rome, 537. Battle of Cannæ.

Two generals having equal authority, with entirely opposite principles, each commanding one day alternately, are two heads striving to lead the same body different ways. Their misunderstanding foreboded an unavoidable misfortune. Varro, taking the opportunity of his day to command, threw himself headlong into the most imminent danger. Nothing could equal the imprudence of his dispositions, nor could any be conceived superior to those of Hannibal. The Romans were surrounded and cut in pieces; and, after an engagement of three hours, the carnage became so dreadful, that the Carthaginian general cried out to spare the conquered. Emilius, with about forty thousand men, of whom there were near three thousand knights, fell in this battle. Varro, followed by a few of the cavalry, fled to Venusia, Venosa.

Noble behaviour of the senate after the defeat.

That magnanimity for which the Romans have been so justly celebrated, was displayed with all its powers upon this occasion, amidst the inexpressible consternation which such a

* La Puglia.

disaster could not fail to produce. They were at last inclined to hearken to the advice of Fabius. The women were forbidden to stir out of their houses, because they added to the general dismay by their cries and lamentations; the gates of the city were shut against those timid people, who thought of flying for their own preservation, lest the intelligence which was received hourly should add to the alarm; the couriers were admitted only in secret; and the senators were employed all over the city to dispel the fears of the people. From the wreck of the army, Varro collected ten thousand men, with whom he returned to Rome, when the senate in a body went out to meet him, and in the most solemn manner thanked him, *for not having despaired of the republic*. This stroke of policy had an effect almost equal to a triumph; but what might not to be expected from senators, each of whom was become almost a Fabius?

Efforts of the Romans to support the war.

At the same time, they carried all their money to the public treasury. The knights and all the tribes followed their example. The youth of seventeen years of age and upwards were enrolled in the troops, and eight thousand * slaves were armed. Whether it proceeded from economy, or to animate the troops with a sense of their duty, or to check the hopes of the enemy, is uncertain, but they refused to ransom the prisoners. Four legions and ten thousand horse were raised in the city, and the allies supplied the numbers that were demanded.

* Before they were enrolled, they were asked if they were willing to take arms. They answered, *Volo, I am willing*. From whence they had the name of *Volones*. This question was not asked the citizens, because they were obliged to serve.

They who censure Hannibal for not taking the advantage of his victory, to lay siege immediately to Rome, do not sufficiently reflect upon the obstructions which the national character of the Romans, exclusive of every thing else, must have presented.

Hanno maintained that they ought to make peace.

Hanno, the inflexible opponent of the Barcan party, perhaps reasoned better at Carthage. Hannibal having sent his brother Mago with the news of the victory gained at Cannæ, and to demand fresh succours. Hanno persevered in his opinion, and maintained, that since the Romans had shown no signs of despair, offered no proposals of peace, nor testified the least desire of obtaining it, they certainly were not reduced to the last extremity, as had been represented; that the present situation of things might procure an advantageous peace, but a a single defeat might overthrow all the designs of Hannibal. He concluded, that they ought not to send any succours into Italy: 'If Hannibal has gained decisive victories, said he, he has no occasion for more troops, and if he can have deceived us, he deserves none.' This opinion was laughed at, but it was justified by the event. As we should be led too far by entering into the detail of these expeditions, I shall confine myself to what is barely needful.

The Carthaginians enervated at Capua.

Capua having revolted from Rome, admitted Hannibal within her walls, where the pleasures that prevailed in that city proved the ruin of his army. The example of the commander becomes contagious; his soldiers grew relaxed; and, instead of military repose, of which they had much occasion, they enjoyed an unmanly rest, which deprived them of all vigour, both

of body and mind. Those men who had been inured to all the toils of war, now carried off debauched women from Capua, which was the occasion of great desertion: they had now no relish for any thing but the delights of Campania. *Having become rich by so many victories*, says Montesquieu, *would not every place have been to them a Capua?* No, it would not, if discipline had been properly maintained.

Advantages gained by the Romans.

However formidable Hannibal had always been, yet the Romans soon recovered the superiority. Sempronius, with a body of slaves, defeated a Carthaginian army. He had promised freedom to all who should bring the head of an enemy; but, observing that time was lost in cutting off the heads during the action, he caused proclamation to be made that not one should be freed if the battle was lost. Then these valiant slaves redoubled their efforts, and by victory purchased a glorious freedom. What stronger proof do we need to convince us how repugnant to human nature is slavery? Philip, king of Macedon, having entered into alliance with Hannibal, made his appearance in Magna Græcia, but being defeated by Levinus, he immediately reimbarked. Even Hannibal retired before Marcellus the consul, who afterwards immortalized himself by the siege of Syracuse, which was one of the great events of this war.

Philip allies himself with Hannibal.

Year of Rome, 539. Marcellus lays siege to Syracuse.

Hiero, a faithful ally of the Romans, died at a very great age; but Hieronymus, his grandson and successor, having adopted other maxims, attached himself to the Carthaginians. This young tyrant, for he deserved no other name, having disgusted the people to whom Hiero had been a father, was killed by conspi-

rators. Nevertheless, the Syracusans espoused the cause of the Carthaginians, which made Marcellus, who was newly arrived in Sicily, form a plan for reducing them.

Archimedes defends it for three years.

The Syracusans had formerly defeated the Athenians; and the famous Archimedes, a relation of the late king's, the greatest geometrician of his age, had rendered it a much more difficult conquest than it had been in the days of Alcibiades. The astonishing effect of his machines, which destroyed the Romans and sunk their galleys, obliged Marcellus, after many extraordinary and fruitless attempts, to change the siege into a blockade. He had even thought of withdrawing, when, being shown a place where the height of the wall could be reached with scaling-ladders, he attempted to carry the city by escalade in the night, and succeeded. He showed every possible mark of respect to the memory of Archimedes, who was killed by a soldier that did not know him. For three years the genius of this single man had defended his country. Syracuse, whose character was greatly similar to that of Athens, was reduced, with the rest of Sicily, into a Roman province.

Taken by escalade.

Year of Rome, 542. The Romans take Capua and Tarentum.

The Romans signalized themselves equally in Spain and Italy. Capua was besieged and hard pressed, when Hannibal, despairing to relieve it, undertook the siege of Rome, on purpose to make a diversion in its favour; but having failed in this bold attempt, Capua was reduced to the greatest extremity. The chief authors of the revolt killed themselves, and the citizens yielded. The inhabitants were entirely dispersed; a new colony was established in their place; and a prefect sent every year to administer jus-

tice. A little after, Tarentum was retaken by Fabius, who found in it a great number of pictures and statues, perfect masterpieces of art, but for which he showed a thorough contempt. When he was asked, what he chose to have done with them? *Let us leave the Tarentines their angry gods*,* said he. On the contrary, Marcellus, who was a man of taste, decorated the Roman temples with the masterpieces of Syracuse. Unfortunately, this great general, the conqueror of Hannibal, fell into an ambuscade, where he was killed, and the last duties were paid to him by the Carthaginian hero. Marcellus was called *the Sword of Rome;* a surname to which he was well entitled by his services.

Death of Marcellus.

CHAPTER VI.

END OF THE SECOND PUNIC WAR.

The two Scipios killed in Spain.

THE war raged with equal violence in Spain, where Publius Scipio and his brother Cneius, had the greatest success, and retook Saguntum, but, dividing their forces, they were overpowered by superior armies, and both killed in the year 541. Marcius, a young knight, had the honour to be their avenger. He forced the enemy's camp in the night, and gained many other important advantages. Yet the loss of the two generals was considered as irreparable, when

* The gods of the Tarentines were dressed like warriors, as was the custom at Sparta.

the great Publius Scipio, son of the eldest brother, made an offer, though but twenty-four years of age, to continue the war, and, being accepted, was appointed proconsul.

His success seemed miraculous; and he was, in some degree, indebted for it, to the art of turning the superstition of the vulgar to the public advantage. If he had not pretended that Neptune appeared to him, and advised him to besiege Carthagena; and if he had not foretold the ebbing of the sea as a prodigy, which was to render the harbour fordable, the very mentioning such an attempt would have made the Romans tremble. Carthagena was taken by assault in one day; in which were found eighteen galleys, a hundred and thirty merchant ships, loaden with provisions, the magazines and arsenals filled with stores, and a vast treasure. This was a deadly blow to the power of Carthage. Year of Rome, 543. Young Scipio takes Carthagena.

The proconsul, by a striking example of virtue, greatly added to his military glory. A young female captive was brought to him of exquisite beauty, with whom he was immediately charmed; but having questioned her, and finding she was betrothed to a prince of the country, instantly restored her to her promised husband, who extolled him as a deity, and procured him several allies. In a short time after, the Romans took Spain from the Carthaginians. The activity, valour, prudence, and reputation of the young general, seconded by his friend Lelius, made him equally dreaded and respected. From that time, Massinissa king of Numidia, resolved to join him, and forsake the Car- He subdues Spain.

thaginians, and became a steady and zealous friend of Rome.

Year of Rome, 548. Is recalled, and chosen consul.

All Spain being reduced, the senate sent successors to relieve Scipio, who laid down his command without murmuring. On his return to Rome, the centuries unanimously decreed him the consulship, before he had attained the age which the law required. Even the *spirit* of the law might make an exception in favour of such uncommon merit.

Asdrubal defeated in Italy.

Asdrubal, the brother of Hannibal, had passed the Alps, in 546, with a very great army, and was completely defeated by the consuls. The Carthaginians lost their general and fifty thousand men in this action, which put an end to the fears of the Roman republic. The number of the Roman citizens having been diminished about one-half since the first campaign by Hannibal, it would have been almost impossible to defend themselves if the two brothers had joined. The greater the dangers they surmounted, the more their courage and confidence acquired strength.

Scipio sent into Africa.

No man but Scipio would have thought of carrying the war into Africa; however, he proposed it, and his success in Spain preserved him from being suspected of rashness. This project was warmly opposed by old Fabius, either from a secret jealousy against a young man who was likely to eclipse him, or rather from an excess of caution which is natural to age; for we ought to put the most favourable construction possible upon the intentions of great men. He alleged, that it was not improbable that by this means Italy might be lost, as it was continually threatened by Hannibal. The senate being

more affected with the reasons given by the consul, appointed Scipio to command in Sicily, with the liberty of passing over to Africa, if he saw a prospect of advantage to the republic. The year was consumed in making preparations; and though Scipio was falsely accused by some envious people of having wasted his time in pursuit of pleasures, yet he was ordered to execute his scheme in quality of proconsul.

Year of Rome, 549. Massinissa and Syphax.

He had scarcely arrived upon the continent, and gained a single advantage over the Carthaginians, when Massinissa declared in favour of Rome. Syphax, another Numidian king, and a rival of Massinissa, declared against her, though formerly attached to Scipio, who defeated him and Asdrubal the Carthaginian general in several bloody engagements. Massinissa reduced Numidia, and married the famous Sophonisba, who had been formerly promised to him, but had been married to Syphax. The fate of this princess is very extraordinary. She passed from slavery to a throne.

Hannibal recalled. Death of Fabius.

In the mean time, the Carthaginians, in consternation, recalled Hannibal, who had sustained heavy losses in Italy. He quitted this charming country with the regret of a conqueror from whom his prey was snatched. But his departure was attended with universal joy at Rome, except from Fabius, who could not partake of the general satisfaction. His mind had probably been weakened, or his temper soured by old age, for he was excessively prejudiced against the great Scipio. If it could proceed from jealousy, of which he has been accused, what degree of virtue is so immaculate as not

to have reason to dread being degraded by vice? Fabius did not outlive this war.

Interview between Scipio and Hannibal.

The Carthaginians having basely broken a truce, Scipio carried fire and sword to the very gates of Carthage, upon which Hannibal was ordered to attack him. He first sent spies to reconnoitre the position of the enemy; but they were seized, and carried before the Roman general, who, after having made them examine every thing, permitted them to depart, and even gave them some money. Hannibal, struck with astonishment at the behaviour of Scipio, was desirous of peace, and requested an interview. He represented to him the vicissitudes of fortune, and endeavoured to inspire him with a desire of restoring peace; offering to resign Spain and all the islands situated upon the coast of Italy. Scipio answered Hannibal as Alexander answered Darius; and they parted to prepare for an engagement.

Year of Rome, 551. Battle of Zama.

The fate of the two nations was to be decided by the famous battle of Zama. The Carthaginian auxiliaries were very soon put to flight, and a multitude of wounded and frightened elephants completed their defeat; but Scipio was in despair of breaking through the Carthaginian phalanx, which Hannibal had formed of his veteran troops, when Lelius and Massinissa, who had returned from pursuing the fugitives, took them in the rear, which decided the victory. The enemy lost forty thousand men killed and taken prisoners, and the Romans only two thousand. It was with difficulty Hannibal could save himself.

Advantage of cavalry.

Let us take notice here, that the Roman cavalry was greatly inferior to both the Numidian

and Spanish, and it was to that inferiority the Carthaginians chiefly owed their success. The desertion of a troop of Numidian horse, after being quartered at Capua, and the alliance with Massinissa, made up for the disadvantage to which the Romans were in this respect exposed.

The consternation which the Romans experienced after the battle of Cannæ, seized the Carthaginians after the battle of Zama. Even Hannibal declared, and easily persuaded the people to believe, that peace was their only resource. Scipio was anxious to have it concluded, lest the new consul should deprive him of the honour of ending the war. He dictated the following terms: 'The Carthaginians to preserve their laws, and to retain all the possessions they held in Africa before the breaking out of the war, but Rome to keep Spain and the Mediterranean islands: That they shall give up all prisoners and deserters, with all their elephants and ships of war, except ten galleys of three banks of oars: They shall not make war either in Africa, or elsewhere without the consent of the Roman people: They shall pay ten thousand talents in the space of fifty years: They shall restore to Massinissa whatever they have taken from him or his ancestors: They shall give a hundred hostages, such as shall be approved by Scipio, in security for the faithful performance of these articles.' Year of Rome, 552. Treaty of peace.

Though several senators were for continuing the war, either from views of ambition, or to favour the new consuls, yet the treaty was ratified at Rome. One of the senators having asked the chief of the Carthaginian embassy, *What* Treaty ratified at Rome.